Issue 1244
September 24, 2015

Rolling Stone

THE TV ISSUE

Fall's Best Shows

Taking Trump Seriously

On the Trail With the GOP's Tough Guy

The Pope's American Crusade

The Weeknd

Macklemore

Duran Duran




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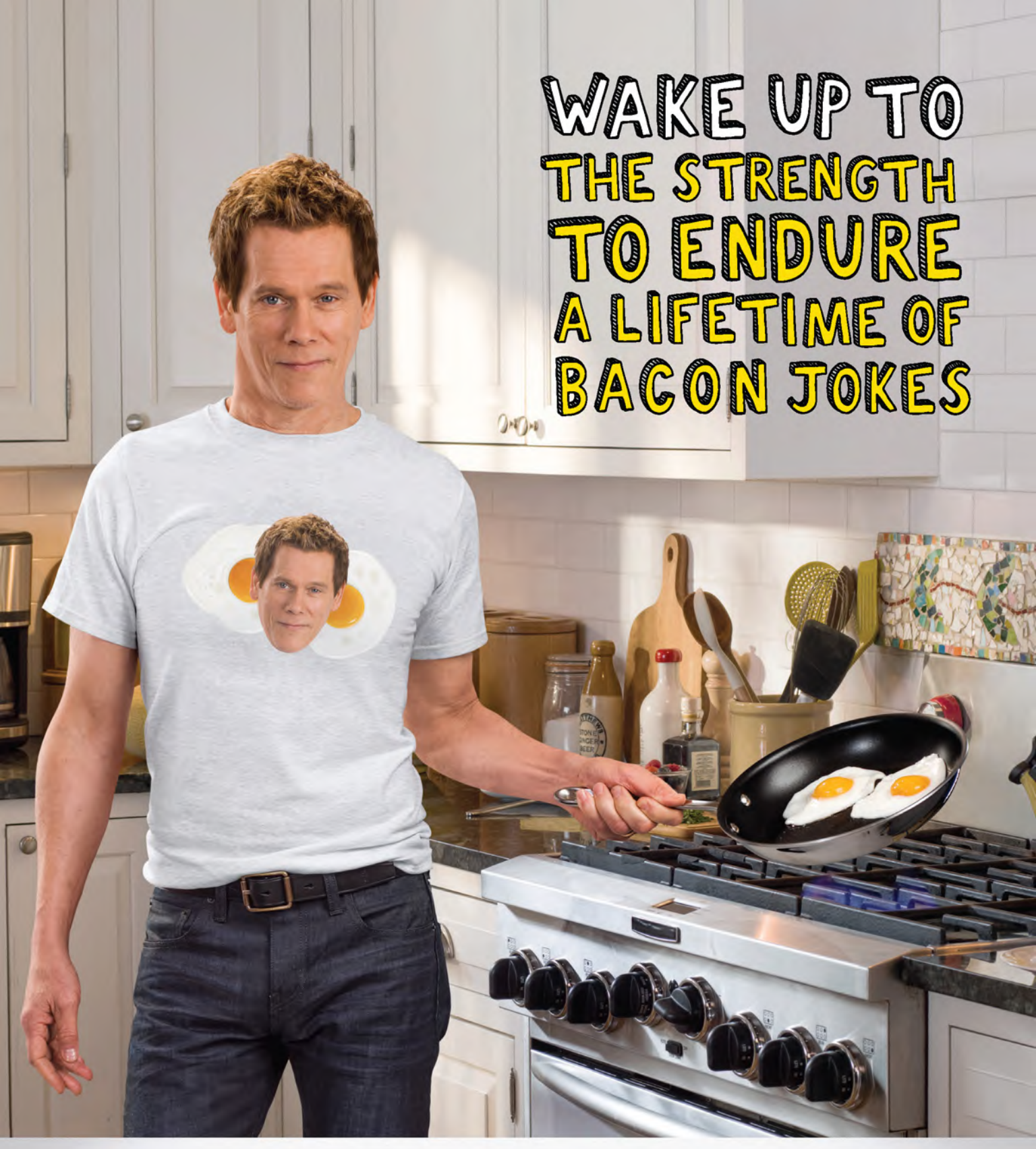
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RS1244 "All the NEWS THAT FITS"

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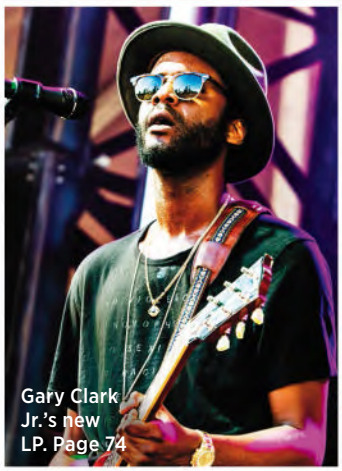
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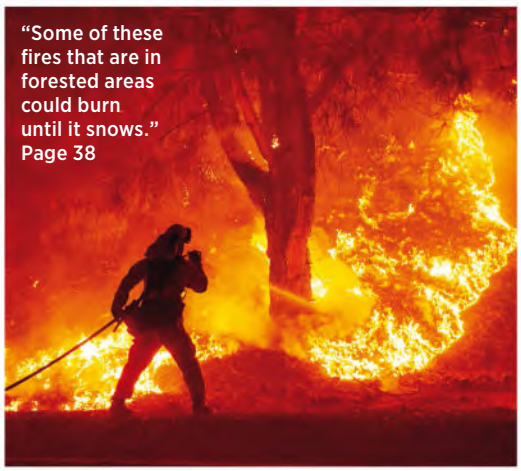
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In *Black Mass,* the actor plays the FBI's most wanted killer.



Miley Cyrus' surprise album. Page 72.



Gary Clark Jr.'s new LP. Page 74



"Some of these fires that are in forested areas could burn until it snows." Page 38

ON THE COVER Donald Trump photographed in New York on August 13th, 2015, by **Mark Seliger**.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: MICHAEL TRAN/FILMMAGIC; NOAH BERGER/EPA/LANDOV; ANDY KEILEN

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MUSIC

Abe Laboriel Jr., Depp, McCartney, Bob Ezrin, Cooper and Perry (from left)

MEET HOLLYWOOD VAMPIRES: BIRTH OF A NEW SUPERGROUP

The unlikely trio of Alice Cooper, Joe Perry and Johnny Depp rounded up some famous friends – from Dave Grohl to Paul McCartney – for their first album as Hollywood Vampires, recorded over two years. We met up with Cooper and Perry to hear the wild story of how it all came together.



INTERVIEW

Q&A: MICHAEL MOORE

The provocative director sat with us at the Toronto Film Fest to talk about *Where to Invade Next,* his new documentary on the military-industrial complex.



PHOTO

BURNING MAN: CRAZIEST PICS

Check some of the weirdest, funniest and nakedest moments from the weeklong fest that attracts thousands to the Nevada desert every year.



VIDEO

AT HOME WITH MAC DEMARCO

ROLLING STONE spent a fun day with the rising indie-rock star at his house in Rockaway, Queens. Presented by Transitions adaptive lenses.

THIS WEEK ON

HUFFPOST LIVE

ANATOMY OF A HIT MUSICAL

Broadway audiences have fallen in love with *Hamilton*. What's behind the hip-hop show's success – and will it redefine the future of the American stage musical?

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Lin-Manuel Miranda



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CORRESPONDENCE LOVE LETTERS & ADVICE



Hip-Hop Masters

THRILLED TO SEE DRE AND Cube on the cover ["American Gangstas," RS 1242]. To a white suburban teenager in the early Nineties, the hip-hop giants of the time were what the Stones and Hendrix were to my parents: radical, fresh and topical. Which they couldn't understand.

Ken Scelfo, Belmar, NJ

N.W.A'S BEAT-THE-ODDS ORigin story got a great telling by Brian Hiatt. *Straight Outta Compton* remains a revolutionary rap record, a masterpiece of music and social justice.

Alicia Gomez, via the Internet

"FEEL THE GROOVE, BUST A move, this is something to dance to." Still so true! A great story on N.W.A, too.

Hank Lee, via the Internet

MAYBE NOW WE CAN GET A film about the truly most dangerous hip-hop group of the same era, Public Enemy.

Ben Brown Jr., via the Internet

Tweedy in Space

WILCO'S SOUND CONTINUES to evolve and impress [Q&A, RS 1242]. But Jeff Tweedy telling Patrick Doyle he didn't know there was a new *Star Wars* movie coming out when he named Wilco's new album *Star Wars*? So not buying that.

Mark Flythe, Hamilton, NJ

Grand Old Circus

In RS 1242, Matt Taibbi traveled to Iowa to report on the Republican presidential campaign and Donald Trump's ascension ["Inside the GOP Clown Car"]. ROLLING STONE readers wrote in.

TAIBBI'S STORY WAS ENraging and enlightening. The GOP's candidates are the political version of *The Bachelor,* and Trump is the Frankenstein monster of our own creation – a schoolyard bully we built ourselves when we bestowed credibility on reality-show personalities. It's fun to watch your three-year-old pretend to drive a car, but would you really give him the keys?

Lisa Oxman, via the Internet

"IT'S LIKE WATCHING 17 platypuses try to mount the queen of England" may be the funniest sentence ever written by man. With the void left by Jon Stewart, I'm grateful Taibbi's back to help us sort out this "would be hysterical if it wasn't so sad" epoch.

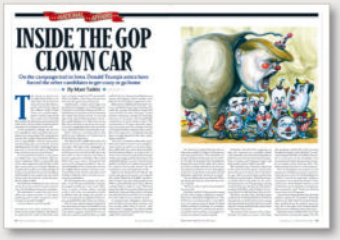
Paul Treffert
Via the Internet

CLASSIC TAIBBI! TOO BAD he didn't spend time with someone of true character: Ben Carson. Can't wait for Matt to put his skills to use with the Dem's girl, Hillary.

Hunter Walsh
Via the Internet

WAIT, WHAT? WHEN EXactly did we "[wrest] control of the political process from the backroom oligarchs"? I wish that were true, but it's very obviously not when one of those very oligarchs has thrown his hat into the ring. It's cynical to act as if the GOP's 2016 candidates are some kind of harbinger of doom. There are still enough Americans with brains and the will to use them for there to be at least a shred of hope.

Aaron Stevens, via the Internet



THE N.W.A COVER STORY may have had bullet holes in its pages, but Taibbi scored a bull's-eye with his dissection of the #GOPClownCar.

Robert Chappell Jr.
La Vergne, TN

I NO LONGER THINK OF them as clowns because they give clowns a bad name.

Jeffrey Nickora, New York

Bees Under Fire

IN HER BEE STORY, ALEX Morris lays out an even worse scenario than I imagined ["The Bee Killers," RS 1242]. Have we learned nothing from the *Silent Spring* era of Rachel Carson besides how to create new, more sophisticated and dangerous poisons?

Lynda A. Hernandez
Santa Ana, CA

AS MUCH AS I ENJOY READing Matt Taibbi's exposés, it was Alex Morris' terrific piece on neonicotinoid pesticides and their effect on bees that really captivated me. Not only is the source of pollination being compromised, but so is the food that we eat.

Gary Glassman, via the Internet

"THE BEE KILLERS" GIVES the impression that EPA has done little to protect bees from harmful pesticide exposure, but pollinator protection has been an agency priority for almost two decades. In 2013, EPA restricted the use of certain neonicotinoid pesticides when bees are present, and we recently proposed prohibiting the use of all acutely toxic pesticides, including neonicotinoids, when commercial bees are present. EPA requires extensive field testing to assess effects on individual bees and bee colonies. We've accelerated the schedule for this review and halted consideration of new outdoor neonic uses until we have the new bee data completed and the pollinator risk assessments.

Jim Jones
Assistant Administrator
EPA's Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention

ALEX MORRIS RESPONDS:

THE PROPOSED PROHIBItions on neonicotinoids mentioned in EPA's letter will hopefully have a beneficial effect on colony health, but they do not address the systemic usage with which my article was primarily concerned. Certainly, neonicotinoid pesticides should not be sprayed or applied when bee-attracting plants are in bloom, but what about the seed-coated neonics that are absorbed into the tissue, pollen and nectar of the plant from the moment it begins to grow? It is this risk of exposure that EPA seems to be skirting here. One hopes that the review currently underway will adequately assess those risks and provide a sensible path forward when it comes to the use of these toxins.

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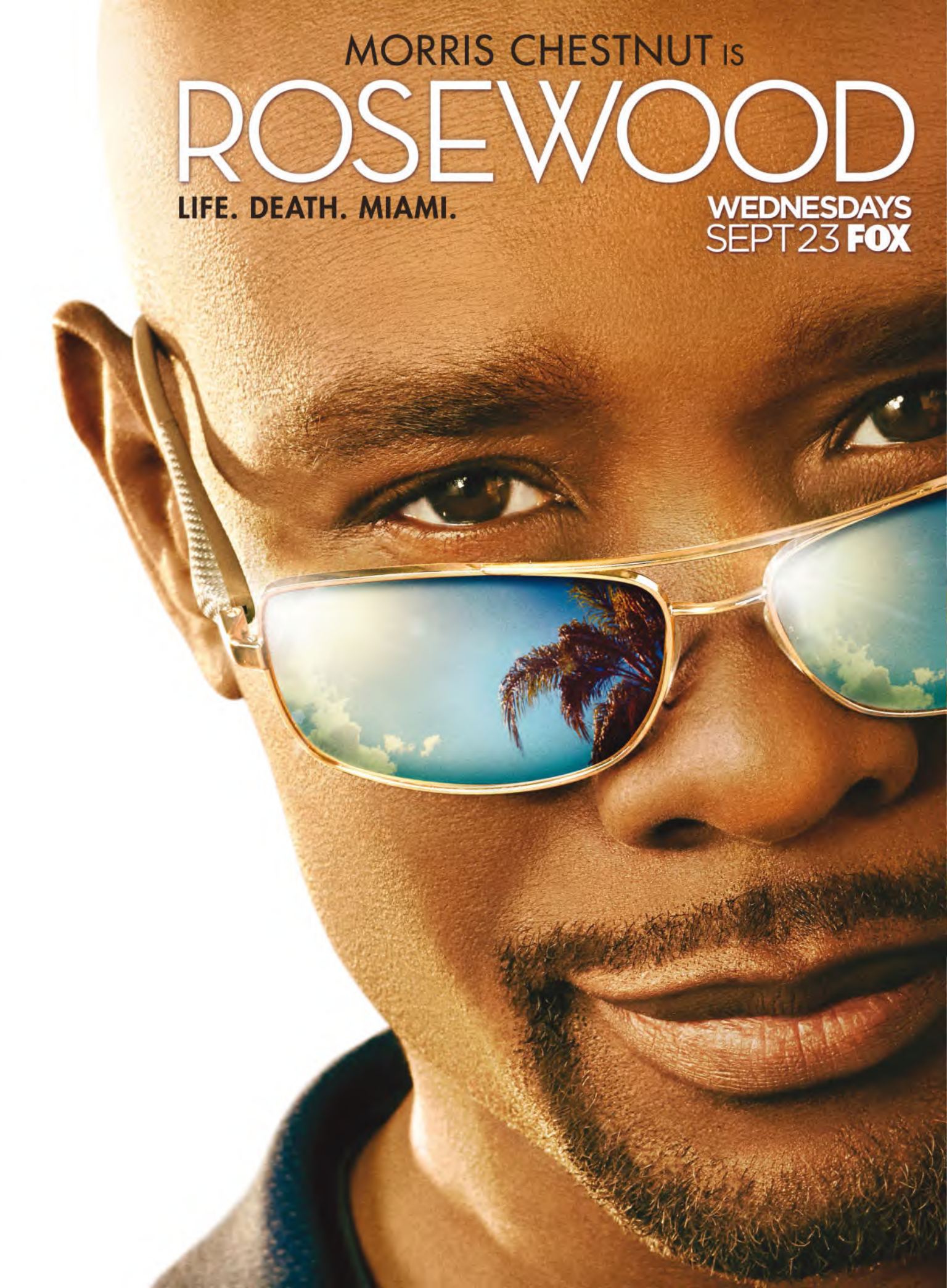
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SHE STOPS THE CRIME.
BASED ON THE HIT FILM BY STEVEN SPIELBERG
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ARIANA GRANDE
"YOUR NEXT TV OBSESSION"
– ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY
DIEGO BONETA
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EMMA ROBERTS
KEKE PALMER
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THE PLAYLIST

OUR FAVORITE SONGS, ALBUMS AND VIDEOS RIGHT NOW



1. Justin Bieber

"What Do You Mean?"

Crying at the VMAs was pretty humanizing. Now he's taken another step on the road to redemption with this genuinely sung, actually good dance-pop tune. Love the new sensitivity, Biebs!

2. Yo La Tengo ▼

"Friday I'm in Love"

The beloved indie-rock icons' latest album, *Stuff Like That There,* is a collection of acoustic covers – from Hank Williams to the Lovin' Spoonful to the Parliaments. The highlight is this tender take on the Cure's 1992 weekend-warrior classic, which turns a buoyant pop tune into a sweet lullaby.





3. The Dead Weather

"I Feel Love (Every Million Miles)"

It's been five years since we've heard from this supergroup, which features Jack White and the Kills' Alison Mosshart. But their new Zeppelin-zonked rocker suggests the wait was more than worth it.



4. Kelly Clarkson

"Jolene"

Clarkson turns the Dolly Parton original into a soulful piano ballad. Step back, Jolene.

5. Car Seat Headrest

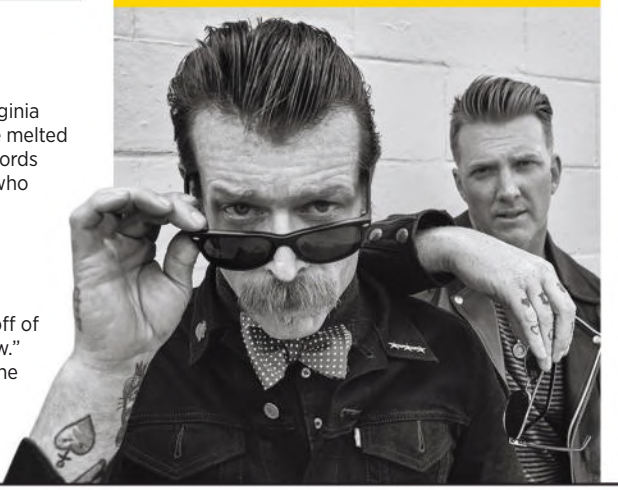
"Something Soon"

Excellent low-fi bubble punk from Virginia whiz kid Will Toledo. It's like someone melted down a stack of Guided by Voices records and shaped them into a 22-year-old who doesn't get out of the house much.

6. Eagles of Death Metal

"Complexity"

Queens of the Stone Age frontman Josh Homme glams out on this track from his devil-horn-throwing sideband's new album, out in October.



7. Nick Jonas

"Levels"

An ingeniously slinky synth-pop rip-off of Alanis Morissette's "You Oughta Know." Jonas reportedly injured himself on the set of its saucy video, and you too would be lucky to skin a knee to a jam this hot.

EXPERT OPINION



Fetty Wap

The New Jersey rapper-singer currently has two Top 10 smashes on the *Billboard* Hot 100 chart (the supercatchy "Trap Queen" and "679") – plus another Top 20 hit with "My Way." We asked him to check out five songs, old and new, and tell us what he thought.

CLASSIC

Abba
"Dancing Queen"
I remember that my mom would always sing this song around the house. It was one of her favorites.

Fugees
"Fu-Gee-La"
The Fugees were instrumental in hip-hop! This is such a classic beat. Everyone I knew would always freestyle over it.

Cam'ron feat. Juelz Santana
"Hey Ma"
When this song came out, I remember hearing all the older dudes where I grew up riding around town saying, "Hey, Ma!" It's still a classic Dipset song.

NEW

Miranda Lambert
"Little Red Wagon"
This one's got a catchy hook! It seems like a turn-up song for the Oklahoma girls.

The Weeknd
"Earned It"
The Weeknd is a cool artist. I like this song – it's a slow and sexy joint for the ladies.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: MICHAEL KOVAC/GETTY IMAGES; JORDI VIDAL/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES; © ERIK KABIK PHOTOGRAPHY/MEDIAPUNCH/CORBIS; CHAPMAN BAEHLER; DAVID JAMES SWANSON



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PROFILE DURAN DURAN PG. 25 | **Q&A** CHRIS CORNELL'S SOLO GLORY PG. 32

Rock & Roll



Macklemore Rides Back Into Town

Mopeds, Melle Mel and a diverse new sound: Inside his new LP

By Simon Vozick-Levinson

AN HOUR BEFORE THEY TOOK THE stage at MTV's Video Music Awards in Los Angeles on August 30th, Macklemore and Ryan Lewis were sure their set was going to be a total disaster. The Seattle rapper-producer duo had just finished the final run-through of the performance – an ambitious outdoor version of their new single, "Downtown," involving tricky choreography and multiple guest vocalists – and nothing was going right. "We watched the playback, and Ryan was bummed," says Macklemore. "He was like, 'Dude, this isn't good. It's going to be a shitshow.'" [*Cont. on 22*]

DOWNTOWN FUNK Macklemore performing during the VMAs

FREDERICK M. BROWN/GETTY IMAGES FOR MTV



Taylor Swift and Beck in L.A. on August 25th

How Taylor Won Summer

THIS SUMMER, TAYLOR SWIFT OWNED MUsic's main stage – and pretty much everyone else was happy to be her special guest. Her latest album, the unabashedly poppy, Max Martin-assisted *1989,* is her biggest yet, with four Top 10 hits so far; in June, she took on Apple Music and won, convincing the company to pay artist royalties during its trial period; and she just won four VMAs, including Video of the Year. Meanwhile, in the nation's arenas and stadiums, she's cemented her dominance, selling out all 85 shows on her ongoing *1989* tour. As if to underscore her newfound place at the center of pop, Swift has played host to a dazzling array of onstage duet partners: current hitmakers like the Weeknd and Fetty Wap; veteran stars like Alanis Morissette, Natalie Maines, Beck and Mary J. Blige; and pals including Selena Gomez and Nick Jonas. "Many of my fans watched my entire concert on the Internet before coming to see the show," Swift says. "It's getting harder to surprise people, but that doesn't mean it's impossible." But despite all the guests, dancers, elevator lifts, pyro – and the electronic bracelets given to attendees that light up in unison – Swift says that her songs are still the star of the show. "If all of that stuff broke, I could still play my entire show on an acoustic guitar," she says. "That's the way it's always been, and I don't see that element of my music ever changing."

A monster tour turns into the party of the year

ANDY GREENE

MACKLEMORE

[*Cont. from 21*] In the end, their first televised performance in more than a year went off without a hitch – but it was a high-stakes moment for more reasons than one. The last awards show Macklemore and Lewis performed at was the 2014 Grammys, where their platinum-selling *The Heist* beat out Kendrick Lamar and others for Best Rap Album. The backlash that followed was swift and brutal: Many fans saw them as symbols of the advantages that white artists have even in a historically black genre. Last fall, the rapper – who got sober in 2008, but relapsed into drug use during his sudden rise to fame – got clean again, and he says the 12-step philosophy has helped him deal with criticism. "What people think of me is none of my business," he says. "If I live on the Internet, looking for public approval, I'm going to be miserable."

The day after the VMAs, Macklemore is calling from a mountain cabin in eastern Washington, where he and Lewis are finishing their follow-up to *The Heist*. "I'm feeling great about this album," he says. "It has a diversity of sounds and concepts." The "Downtown" video has been viewed more than 6 million times on YouTube; the song is the result of an 18-month-long recording process. What began as a whimsical tune about the mopeds they'd bought to relieve the monotony of touring became a five-minute epic with shades of Seventies rock, show tunes and more. "There was a long time when I didn't think I was going to be able to capture what was in our heads," Lewis says.

At one point, Macklemore, who'd been listening to a Sirius XM old-school rap station, tried out some Eighties cadences, at Lewis' suggestion. "I was like, 'We have to reach out to the dudes that came up with this style,'" Macklemore says. "It didn't feel right to appropriate that tone without seeing if they at least liked it." Luckily, their manager is friendly with Big Daddy Kane, who convinced OG MCs Grandmaster Caz, Melle Mel and Kool Moe Dee to fly to Seattle and record vocals. (Lewis had to give up control over the session: "I gave them one note of feedback," he recalls. "Kool Moe Dee was like, 'Are you trying to tell Melle Mel how to rap?!'")

Macklemore and Lewis hope to release the new LP by the end of 2015 – three full years after *The Heist*. "I've never been the type of person who's going to turn out a mixtape every few months," says Macklemore. "I needed to figure out what I wanted to say. So I had to live."

CHRISTOPHER POLK/GETTY IMAGES FOR TAS

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A Rising Star of Rom-Com Raunch

Writer-director Leslye Headland rethinks the romantic comedy

RIGHT NOW, FEW, IF ANY, directors are doing foulmouthed humor with as much heart or balls as Leslye Headland. Here's a primer on the 34-year-old.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR Headland's new film, *Sleeping With Other People,* is a mix of screwball comedy and straight-up raunch that follows two friends (Jason Sudeikis and Alison Brie) who bond over their inability to make relationships work. "It's *When Harry Met Sally* for assholes," Headland says.

CHOICE WORDS Headland's been an outspoken critic of the way Hollywood treats female directors. When she first pitched her 2012 film, *Bachelorette,* she says, "I was told, 'You should probably ask your parents for $250,000 and shoot the thing yourself.'...And look what happened to Ava DuVernay. She's the Beyoncé of filmmaking, and she can't get nominated for *Selma*! [Hollywood] isn't interested in women unless we're in a group and a *Vanity Fair* spread. Probably just wearing lingerie."

THE RIGHT TOUCH A key scene in *Sleeping With Other People* involves Sudeikis teaching Brie how to masturbate by fingering a plastic bottle. "I was surprised men have no idea what's going on with the vagina," Headland says. "I figured that if I could get a guy to demonstrate how to finger a bottle and have it be sexy and not straight-up gross, then I know I've made it." **DAVID FEAR**

AUTUMN OF THE BIOPIC

If you're a movie star right now, there's a decent chance you're playing a real person in your next film. Here's a look at five biopics due this fall – and how the portrayal compares to the real deal **By David Fear**

Black Mass SEPTEMBER 18th

Johnny Depp's portrayal of Boston crime boss Whitey Bulger was so uncanny it unnerved crew members who grew up in the city. The actor plays him as a Southie psychopath who helps an old lady, then calmly shoots an associate. "We studied surveillance footage to capture his physicality," director Scott Cooper says. "Bulger was so fascinating because he was so multifaceted and complex. Cunning. Humorous. Deadly."


Bulger


Depp

Steve Jobs OCTOBER 9th

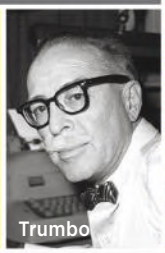

Fassbender

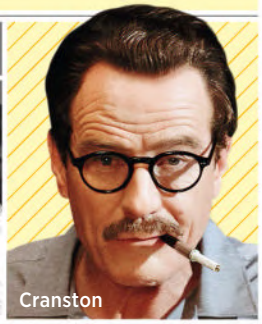

Jobs

Working from Walter Isaacson's biography of Jobs, screenwriter Aaron Sorkin tackled the Apple CEO's career through three product launches (the movie consists of three real-time scenes). Michael Fassbender doesn't try to do a Jobs impersonation, but makes the unrelentingly intense Jobs seem self-aware and sympathetic. There have been a few Jobs biopics, but none dive as deeply into his mercurial genius.

Trumbo NOVEMBER 6th

A successful screenwriter in the 1940s, Dalton Trumbo became a First Amendment hero after getting blacklisted during the Red Scare and speaking out against the House Un-American Activities Committee. Bryan Cranston nails his radical politics and roguish charisma. "[Before *Trumbo*] Hollywood had never made a movie based on a true story of the blacklist," says screenwriter John McNamara.


Trumbo


Cranston

I Saw the Light NOVEMBER 27th


Hiddleston


Williams

In this Hank Williams biopic, British actor Tom Hiddleston doesn't just play the man called "the Hillbilly Shakespeare" – he also sings all of Williams' songs in the film. To prepare, Hiddleston studied Williams' guitar technique with the help of veteran country singer-songwriter Rodney Crowell. "Hank's life has a tragic arc," Hiddleston has said of Williams, who died at age 29, "but in simple truth, he was a genius."

Snowden DECEMBER 25th

In this Oliver Stone film, Joseph Gordon-Levitt plays Edward Snowden, who blew the lid off the NSA's domestic-spying program and became one of the world's most wanted men. Gordon-Levitt has said he's not a good impersonator, so expect a more impressionistic portrayal. The actor did have firsthand material to draw on – he met Snowden (now a fugitive in Russia) to prepare for the part.


Snowden


Gordon-Levitt

FROM TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: COURTESY OF LESLYE HEADLAND/JFC FILMS; REX FEATURES/AP IMAGES; AKED JAXN/AKM-GSI; UNIVERSAL PICTURES; © KIM KULISH/CORBIS; © BETTMANN CORBIS; HILARY BRONWYN GAYLE/BLEECKER STREET FILMS; ALAN MARKFIELD/SONY PICTURES CLASSICS; MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES; BARTON GELLMAN/GETTY IMAGES; MARK WILKINS/FAMEFLYNET PICTURES

The Tao of Duran Duran

How four perma-cool New Wave survivors stay hungry like wolves By Rob Sheffield

THE GENTLEMEN OF DURAN Duran gather in a posh suite high atop the Carlyle hotel in New York. The business at hand: inspecting a canvas of the artwork for their excellent new album, *Paper Gods*. It's a collage of images from their videos over the years: the Eiffel Tower from "A View to a Kill," the sumo wrestler from "Girls on Film," the limo driver's cap from "The Chauffeur." Simon Le Bon, dashing as ever in a natty white suit, looks over the canvas approvingly, but then furrows Le Brow. "There's just one thing I don't recognize," he says, pointing to the lower-left corner. "The yellow cocktail. Where's that one from?"

"'Rio,'" he's reminded. The scene from their most famous video, where a mysterious tray of brightly colored cocktail glasses appears in the middle of the ocean while the band frolics on a yacht. In the video, Le Bon helps himself to one of the cocktails, and then, still in his snorkling gear, attempts to drink it underwater. A legendary moment in the history of ridiculous rock-star excess – but for Le Bon, just another day at work. "Ah-ha, yes," he says, breaking into a fond grin. "Now I remember."

"Not many people would have bet on us to make a 14th album."

Now the afternoon sun streams through the windows as Le Bon lounges in a plush chair, offering a mug of herbal tea to a guest. The Carlyle was the scene of some hardcore debauchery for Duran Duran in the Eighties, but life has changed. "The London paper just did a story reporting how we now drink herbal tea instead of having sex with supermodels and snorting lines of cocaine," drummer Roger Taylor says, a bit defensively. "But it *was* 11:00 in the morning."

Le Bon lets out a hearty laugh: "Well, that wouldn't have stopped me back then."

Duran Duran blew out of Birmingham in the early 1980s, summing up the glamour and madness of the U.K.'s New Romantic scene in a swirl of sex, synths and style. They were a whole band of bona fide rock stars: flamboyant frontman Le Bon, cerebral keyboard wizard Nick Rhodes, silent-but-smoldering drummer Roger Taylor, and wild-boy bass rake John Taylor, along with long-gone original guitarist Andy Taylor. None of the Taylors were related – but it was the perfect surname for such a fashion-savvy band. When Duran Duran blew up, most people predicted they would burn out fast. ROLLING STONE's advice at the time: "Get it while you can, guys."



GUYS ON FILM John Taylor, Le Bon, Roger Taylor and Rhodes (from left). "We look more to modern artists than musicians [for inspiration]," says Rhodes. "Like Ed Ruscha or Jeff Koons."

Yet instead of playing oldies tours or Eighties cruises, DD are still making inventive music. *Paper Gods* – which the band is promoting with a tour in North America and the U.K. throughout the fall – is one of their best ever, with goth R&B ballads, electro-funk dance tracks and dark-wave synth-pop, plus a stellar cast of collaborators: Janelle Monáe, Mr Hudson, long-lost ex-Red Hot Chili Peppers guitar legend John Frusciante, longtime comrades Mark Ronson and Nile Rodgers. There's even a Lindsay Lohan cameo.

It sounds like an adventurous DJ's set, not a band that's been playing together 35 years. Says Le Bon, "What do you call those horses, not the favorites, the ones with the long odds? In the Eighties, if you were betting on bands that might make a 14th album, we would not have been in the top 10."

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Duran Duran remain a band full of giant personalities, with a notoriously devoted female fan base. "We felt we had more in common with our female audience, really," Rhodes says. "We were never interested in anything macho." Part of DD's mystique is their timeless power to keep the ladies dancing. "The smart guys went to Duran Duran concerts because that's where the girls were," Le Bon says. "They might not have liked us when they walked in, but by the end of the concert they had a bit of affection for Duran Duran."

The bandmates indulge one another's different geek passions, whether they're raving about Rolls-Royce design or the latest exhibit at the Whitney. If you try to remember the name of that Andy Warhol movie where Edie Sedgwick throws an ashtray, you can count on Rhodes being the one to reply instantly, "*Beauty #2*." John Taylor is the kind of serious music geek who loves to debate the different running orders of the U.S. and U.K. editions of the Beatles' *Rubber Soul*.

Rhodes and John Taylor have their own special chemistry – they're childhood friends who grew up together in Birmingham. They were the only two kids on their block who owned a copy of *Ziggy Stardust* – what lifelong friendships are made of. As Taylor writes in his essential 2012 memoir, *In the Pleasure Groove*, "Nick and I both wore chiffon without needing much encouragement." Making music together means dealing with their shared history. "You have to be prepared to get in the muck with each other," John says. "When you're trying to write music that has depth and intimacy to it, you've got to be prepared for some arguments. Because we've got a lot of baggage, and that baggage can get in the way. So we've always got to keep things clear."

Rhodes nods thoughtfully. "You have to keep the rough sex out of the way of the Louis Vuittons," he says.

They started as art-school boys in the punk years, with a revolutionary musical concept: to combine Chic with the Sex Pistols. In the New Romantic spirit, DD crashed through sexual boundaries as well as musical ones, with gender-bending lipstick, frilly shirts and fire-hazard hair.

While scrounging around for a singer, they heard about a local drama student named Simon Le Bon. (Yes, his real name.) He showed up for the audition with a notebook full of his poetry, wearing pink leopard-skin pants and a suede jacket. He got the gig before he even started to sing. As DD conquered the world, Rhodes became tight with art-world pals like Warhol. Roger Taylor retreated from the spotlight and retired to a farm. Yet the core trio of Le Bon, Rhodes and John kept scoring hits into the Nineties. As Roger puts it, "We've escaped our decade."

Together, they've gone through the cycle of being cool, being uncool, being post-cool and then cool again. They reached permanent-cool status when they rounded up the classic Fab Five lineup for their perfectly timed 2002 reunion, or as John dubbed it, the "Reunion of the Snake." Their last album, 2010's *All You Need Is Now*, was the musical comeback they needed, reclaiming the vintage DD sound that every band on rock radio was trying to duplicate. But *Paper Gods* is a completely different album, reaching into more adventurous and experimental areas. As Rhodes says, "We look more to modern artists than musicians – Ed Ruscha or Jeff Koons or Richard Prince. A lot of artists can keep changing their styles and come up with new shows, which are like albums. The whole ethos of Duran Duran is that we're able to move around and do different things because we like art, photography, fashion, design. Having all these people on the record – it's like casting a film, isn't it?"

> **"The smart guys went to Duran Duran concerts because that's where the girls were."**

The songs on the new album keep bringing up the theme of facing the future and not looking back. "Well, that's me all over," Le Bon says. "That is how I live my life: 'I'm done with that, what's next?' I mean, the future's now. Now is the time you can experience those moments – that chance meeting of eyes that puts you in touch with the love of your life." Le Bon met his wife in the most Eighties-rock-star way imaginable: flipping through a model agency's cards, looking for a hot date for an upcoming film premiere. But defying all expectations, he and supermodel Yasmin Le Bon have been happily married for 30 years. John Taylor's wife is Juicy Couture co-founder Gela Nash. When they met, in 1996, she didn't recognize him, as she'd barely heard of Duran Duran – which means he married one of the few American women who hasn't always been madly in love with John Taylor.

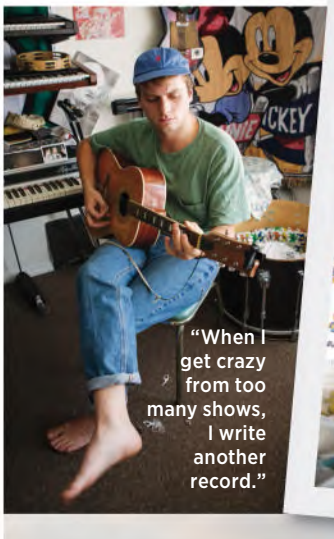
The Duran Duran influence keeps showing up in the strangest places – Taylor Swift just did a synth-pop anthem called "New Romantics." (Rhodes' response: "Well, she's intelligent, isn't she? I haven't heard that song, but she's got something for sure.") And as they head out on another world tour, they're in a position enviable for any group: They can play the new songs as well as the hits without worrying about anyone sitting down. Says Le Bon, "Some bands are really happy with being a band that people have to sit down and get stoned to. But, you know, I like to get people up and dancing. There's a lot to be said for being a party band. It's a hell of a lot of fun."


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At Home With Mac DeMarco

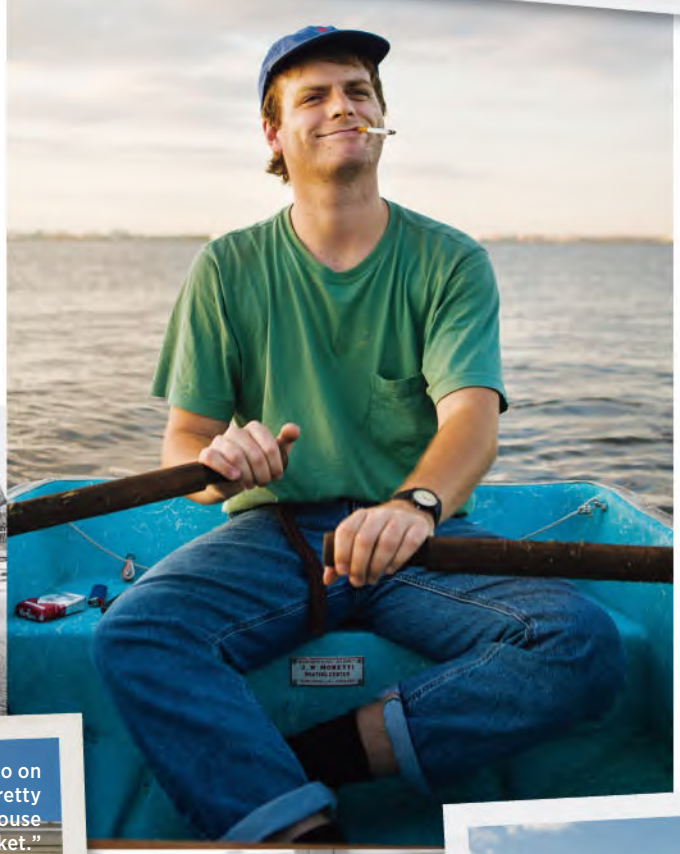
DAWN TO DUSK A year ago, Canadian folk-rock prankster Mac DeMarco was feeling cramped in the windowless Brooklyn loft he shared with nine people, so he went on Craigslist and found a house on a dingy stretch of Jamaica Bay in Far Rockaway, Queens. There, he recorded his latest LP, *Another One*, on which he gives out his address and tells fans to stop by – a questionable decision for an A-list indie star (and huge festival draw) with a rabid fan base. "We started getting 60, 70 people a day coming by," he says. "It's nice kids are into it enough to travel to a weird New York neighborhood."

To see an exclusive video of DeMarco at home in Queens, visit RollingStone.com/dawntodusk.



"When I get crazy from too many shows, I write another record."

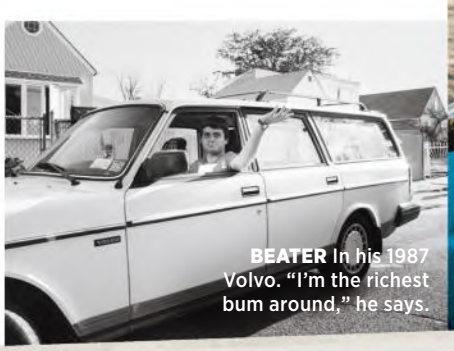




HOME STUDIO ▲ DeMarco in his bedroom, where he recorded his latest album. "I wanted to write love songs," DeMarco says of *Another One*. "It covers the whole scope of the weird feelings in the chest."

CAPTAIN MAC ◀ DeMarco hits the water in his rowboat.

SCAVENGING ▼ Picking up a horseshoe crab. DeMarco spends free time on the water or enjoying huge meals with housemates and fans who show up unannounced.



BEATER In his 1987 Volvo. "I'm the richest bum around," he says.



COME ON IN DeMarco on his front porch. "I'm pretty sure this is the only house in my price bracket."



Playing one of the 15 keyboards at the house.



Photographs by Jessica Lehrman







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Chris Cornell

The Soundgarden leader on his solo LP, secret folk influences and why he sometimes feels like Neil Young

By David Fricke



"In this case, I feel more is more," says singer Chris Cornell of Seattle hard-rock veterans Soundgarden, referring to the recent reissue of his 1999 solo debut, *Euphoria Mourning*, and his new, mostly acoustic album, *Higher Truth*. The latter was inspired by Cornell's *Songbook* tour – a one-man show launched in 2011 with "25 years of songs I've written for different bands. I distilled what I do down to me and a guitar and arrived at a singer-songwriter identity." Cornell takes *Songbook* back on the road this fall. He has also started work on Soundgarden's next album. "I spent the last week and a half doing demos. We're going to meet in four days and spend a week together. By the end, we'll have a lot of stuff."

Your new album opens with you playing mandolin in "Nearly Forgot My Broken Heart." Do you have any secret folk influences you've been hiding all these years?

I rejected most of the folk I was exposed to in the Seventies. I came around later to Tom Waits, some parts of Jim Croce and a lot of Cat Stevens. One of the Robinson brothers from the Black Crowes turned me on to Nick Drake. I found a box set on vinyl and pretty much hated it – until I got to [1972's] *Pink Moon*. His guitar playing and the compositions are phenomenal.

Are there Soundgarden songs that you play on the *Songbook* tour that have surprised you – that don't need all of the band's heavy hullabaloo?

"Outshined." I had written an instrumental part in the middle, an interlude, on electric guitar. On acoustic guitar, it turned out to have a nice Led Zeppelin-y feel. And the vocals flipped into a dirty-blues thing.

You have always resisted comparisons between Soundgarden and Zeppelin. But the contrast of folk guitar and hard-rock vocal dynamics on *Higher Truth* reminds me of *Led Zeppelin III.*

It makes sense to me if you look at the range I have as a singer and how I sing over a guitar arrangement. There's only so far in a British-folk direction I can go, being an American. But there are a handful of bands – Zeppelin, the Beatles, Pink Floyd, Killing Joke – where if I'm writing a song and it reminds me of them, I'll steer into it, rather than run in the other direction.

You made your 2009 solo album, *Scream,* with the hip-hop producer Timbaland. It went Top 10, but the reviews were brutal. Was it a success or a failure?

It was absolutely a noble failure. A family friend was good friends with Timbaland's cousin. He said, "Timbaland wants to make a song with you." I said, "Awesome, let's make an album." I figured it would take two weeks, and I would have this crazy fucking record. That's what happened. For me, it was a success. The failure in it was the record company trying to figure out what to do with it. The radio stations who had been playing my songs since 1990 – they were like, "We don't want to play this. We can't play this."

How did you cope with the Nineties nostalgia that came with Soundgarden's tour last year with Nine Inch Nails?

There's no way to be a 30-year-old band, go on tour and pretend the nostalgia isn't happening. It was also important that young rock fans were discovering both bands at the same time. If you talk to Trent Reznor, you don't get the sense of a guy living in the past. I would hope he would say the same thing about me. It was that attitude that kept it from being like Whitesnake going on tour with Styx.

Is there new rock out there that excites you?

I get a sense of healthy revivalism, in a way that will spawn new rock that is interesting and exciting. That comes from guys like Jack White and [the Black Keys'] Dan Auerbach. Unfortunately, when terms like "rock" and "alternative rock" get thrown out there, it's as genres with rules. I always looked at rock & roll as the voice of regular people, of an economic group not in charge. Look at a film like *Straight Outta Compton*, the origins of it – rock is in hip-hop now.

Speaking of films, did you see the Kurt Cobain documentary *Montage of Heck*?

Uh-uh. It wasn't something I was going out of my way to see. I will at some point.

But you were in the Seattle episode of Dave Grohl's *Sonic Highways* series. Did he catch the city and scene you knew?

It's impossible to capture what I saw. But what I experienced goes further back – years before anybody gave a fuck about what Seattle was. Seattle itself didn't give a shit about its own music. No matter how many fans you had, if a worse band with less following came from out of town, you opened for them. It's never been my inclination to see what other people have put together to describe it.

You've got this solo tour coming up and a new Soundgarden album. Do you feel a little schizophrenic?

It's hugely refreshing. Now I kind of get Neil Young. He goes on tour with Crazy Horse, then he's out with Booker T. & the MGs. Then he's on tour by himself with seven guitars. It makes sense to me now. He's not trying to find who he is.

He is all of those things.

And all of these things are me.

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"Millions are in love with Metallica and Black Sabbath. I just thought they were great jokes." —Keith Richards

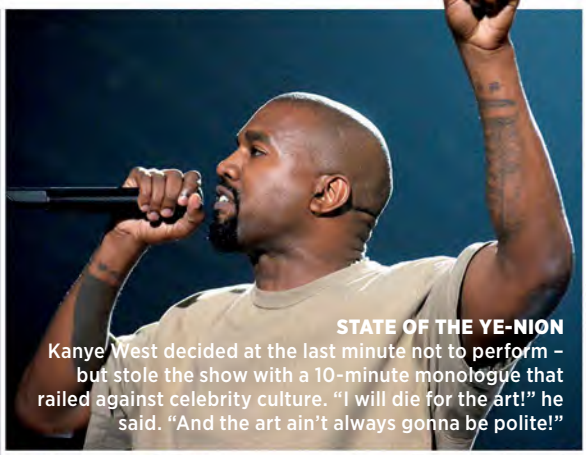
Random Notes

Miley's Deranged Variety Show

This year's VMAs had it all: WWE-worthy beefs, a dozen costume changes by host Miley Cyrus, and a weeping Justin Bieber. But none of it was as wild as Miley's afterparty at L.A.'s Beacher's Madhouse, which included a cake with a vomiting Barbie on top, plus randomly placed sex toys and little people flying around in harnesses. Cyrus hung out with rumored girlfriend, model Stella Maxwell, as well as guests like Jared Leto and Wayne Coyne. "She climbed the sign on top of the Roosevelt Hotel naked at 7 a.m.," says Coyne. "But that's just a normal night for us."



GOING CASUAL Cyrus announced the surprise release of her experimental psych-pop album at the end of the ceremony. "I'm not making mainstream melodies," she says.



STATE OF THE YE-NION Kanye West decided at the last minute not to perform – but stole the show with a 10-minute monologue that railed against celebrity culture. "I will die for the art!" he said. "And the art ain't always gonna be polite!"



HEELS OF FIRE Taylor Swift picked up Video of the Year for "Bad Blood." "I'm just happy that in 2015 we live in a world where boys can play princesses and girls can play soldiers," she said.



BAD BLOOD Nicki Minaj thanked her pastor before calling Cyrus a "bitch."



THE FAMILY CUBE Ice Cube accompanied son O'Shea Jackson Jr., who portrayed his dad in the box-office-dominating *Straight Outta Compton*. "I know all sides of my father," Jackson told RS. "I had to humanize him a little bit."



WEEKND WARRIOR The Weeknd gave a pyro-heavy performance ahead of his fall arena tour. "I want to be like Prince, where you do a stadium and then the aftershow is, like, 500 people in Williamsburg," he says.



IT'S BRUNO, BITCH Britney Spears presented Bruno Mars with a Moonman for "Uptown Funk." Spears is currently in the studio: "I have ballads and, of course, dance music – fun, cheeky, sexy stuff."

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: CHRISTOPHER POLK/MTV1415/GETTY IMAGES; JEFF KRAVITZ/MTV1415/FILMMAGIC; CHRISTOPHER POLK/GETTY IMAGES; JOHN SHEARER/GETTY IMAGES; ROLO/AKM-GSI; JOHN SHEARER/GETTY IMAGES; CHRISTOPHER POLK/MTV1415/GETTY IMAGES



HIGH VOLTAGE AC/DC brought a new lineup and new songs to New Jersey's MetLife Stadium for their *Rock or Bust* tour, which is rumored to be hitting arenas early in '16.



BIEBS ON BOARD Justin Bieber showed off his kickflip before a *Tonight Show* appearance, where he explained past bad behavior: "I just had a bunch of knuckleheads around me. That was pretty much it."



THE DIVISION BILL Bill Clinton caught up with Roger Waters at a Hamptons party hosted by Jimmy Buffett.



Libertines: Bloody Great!

London's Libertines brought blotto charm to the Reading Festival, playing songs from their first album in 11 years, the shockingly great *Anthems for Doomed Youth*. "I suppose sitting at the typewriter with guitars and banging it out, we got the old feeling again," says Pete Doherty.



PHISH FRY Phish played their Magnaball fest in Watkins Glen, New York, where they performed eight sets in three days. "We're playing better now than we have in a really long time," Trey Anastasio says. "I feel like some kind of imaginary pressure has gone away."



FREAK FLAG Snoop was the top dog at a charity flag-football tournament in L.A. "I'm gonna go hard like I always do," he said.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE; 247PAPS.TV/SPLASH NEWS; SHIRLAINE FORREST/WIREIMAGE; REX SHUTTERSTOCK; DANNY CLINCH; SCOTT ROTH/INVISION FOR OPEN ROAD FILMS/AP IMAGES



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The Fire This Time (and the Next Time)

What megablazes in the Pacific Northwest tell us about the fiery future of climate change

By Tim Dickinson

IN MAY THIS YEAR, THE NEARLY UNTHINKABLE HAPPENED in the Pacific Northwest: The rainforest of the Olympic Peninsula, one of the wettest places on the continent, caught fire. By August, an inferno was stirring in the forests east of the Cascades. A wind-whipped blaze near the mountain town of Twisp, Washington – a "hell storm," to quote a local sheriff – claimed the lives of three Forest Service fire scouts. That blaze soon exploded into the worst wildfire in state history, charring more than 300,000 acres and destroying dozens of homes. ¶ As they raged, the wildfires in eastern Oregon and Washington devoured an area nearly the size of Delaware. The states called up more than 1,000 members of their National Guards, and the Army mobilized 200 active-duty troops to the fire lines. Ten Blackhawk helicopters and four C-130 Hercules aircraft deployed to help fight fire from the skies. With Gov. Jay Inslee calling the blazes an "unprecedented cataclysm," Washington even deputized citizen volunteers to fight the fires, where they joined professional crews from as far away as Australia and New Zealand.

This is the present, and the future, of climate change. Our overheated world is amplifying drought and making megafire commonplace. This is happening even in the soggy Pacific Northwest, which has been hard-hit by what's been dubbed a "wet drought." Despite near-normal precipitation, warm winter temperatures brought rain instead of snow to the region's mountains. What little snow did hit the ground then melted early, leaving the Northwest dry – and ready to burn in the heat of summer.

The national data is as clear as it is troubling: "Climate change has led to fire seasons that are now on average 78 days longer than in 1970," according to a Forest Service report published in August. In the past three decades, the annual area claimed by fire has doubled, and the agency's scientists predict that fires will likely "double again by midcentury."

The human imprint on the bone-dry conditions that lead to fire is real – and now measurable. According to a major new study by scientists at Columbia and NASA, man-made warming is increasing atmospheric evaporation – drawing water out of Western soil, shrubs and trees. In California alone, the epic drought is up to 25 percent more severe than it would have been, absent climate change. And this impact doesn't respect state borders. The study's lead author, Columbia scientist Park Williams, tells ROLLING STONE, "There's the same effect in the Pacific Northwest."

Standing near fire lines in late August, Inslee vowed to extinguish the blazes in his state. But the governor also called on Americans to confront an enemy fiercer and more insidious than fire itself. He declared, "We've got to attack this at its source: carbon pollution."

THE FIERY FUTURE IS UPON us. Pervasive drought and record temperatures – July was the warmest month ever physically recorded on planet Earth – have turned forests from Fresno to Fairbanks into tinderboxes. In Alaska, more than 5 million acres burned – surpassing the 10-year average for the entire country. With months left in the fire season, the blazes of 2015 have already scorched more than 8 million acres, according to the National Interagency Fire Center – a record pace, likely to top the 9.8 million acres that burned in 2006. "Some of these fires that are in these forested areas could burn until it snows," said NIFC spokeswoman Jessica Gardetto.

Steep reductions in greenhouse pollution can lessen the danger going forward, as Inslee suggests. But the dark reality is that significant future burning has already been locked in. In parts of the West, very large fires will increase sixfold by midcentury, according to a new study from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. With our nation's firefighting resources tapped out by the fires of the present, America finds itself woefully unprepared for the blazes to come, much less the worst-case scenario: a Katrina by fire.

For a glimpse of the future, look north, to Alaska and the Arctic – which President Obama, during a visit to Anchorage this summer, highlighted as "the leading edge of climate change." Soaring temperatures and an early-melting snowpack



CALIFORNIA BURNING Wildfires destroyed 70,000 acres near Clear Lake, causing thousands to be evacuated.

JOSH EDELSON/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

have brought raging wildfires to landscapes that have not been kissed by flame for millennia. "Climate change is no longer some far-off problem," Obama declared. "It is happening here. It is happening now."

The world is warming most toward the poles, and temperatures in Alaska have been increasing nearly twice as fast as the rest of the country in the past 60 years – up almost three degrees. And the state's average fire season has increased by more than a month – 35 days – since the 1950s. "We can detect the climate-change influence on fire," says Glenn Juday, a forest ecologist at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks, who points to three indicators all on the upswing: "the area burned, the severity of the burning and then the frequency."

The tragedy of climate-driven megafire is that the fires themselves worsen global warming by pumping megatons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. This is especially true north of the Arctic Circle. For the past 5,000 years, the Arctic Alaskan tundra was too frigid and too wet to support significant wildfire. That changed in 2007, when a massive blaze ripped through Alaska's North Slope. The fire burned more than 400 square miles, not only charring a pristine landscape, but setting off a greenhouse bomb, igniting organic matter in the soil that had lain dormant for centuries. This single fire released as much carbon dioxide into the air as the Arctic's entire tundra ecosystem, including the northern reaches of Canada and Russia, had absorbed in the previous quarter century. Scientists long considered the tundra the "most secure storehouse of carbon – fixed carbon, keeping it out of the atmosphere – that you could possibly think of," says Juday. "It was frozen – and a thick mat of it. We never thought a big chunk of it would burn. It's astounding." What's worse: Tundra fire also thins the soil layer that insulates permafrost, further destabilizing this terrifying reserve of greenhouse gases.

Wildfires in Oregon and Washington devoured an area the size of Delaware. More than 1,000 National Guard and 200 Army troops were sent in to fight at the fire lines.

This summer, Alaska was set to burn due to an unusually warm winter combined with a pitiful snowfall. (Anchorage recorded barely two feet of snow – shattering a record that had held up for 60 years.) With spring came soaring temperatures: more than seven degrees above average statewide. The city of Eagle, Alaska, 200 miles east of Fairbanks, hit 91 degrees in May – a higher temperature than had been recorded to that date in either Houston or Dallas.

When lightning struck, Alaska blazed. "At one point this summer," Obama noted, "more than 300 wildfires were burning at once." Blazing largely out of control, the fires consumed 5.1 million acres – the second-worst fire season on record. As bad as wildfire has been in Alaska, it will only get worse, according to the National Climate Assessment, the 2014 federal report that gauges regional risks of climate change. Assume everything goes right at climate talks this year in Paris; assume world governments leap to action with aggressive measures to curb carbon

emissions – even under this scenario, according to the report, Alaska wildfire will double by 2050 and triple by 2100.

As worldwide temperatures rise, wildfires will only increase. But what is less intuitive is how a dangerous drought and fire season have gripped the Pacific Northwest – despite annual precipitation levels that were close to normal. The problem, it turns out, was not a lack of water, but rather that so little of it fell as snow.

Under typical conditions, deep mountain snowpacks and late spring stream runoff give protection from wildfire by keeping trees and vegetation moist far into summers that can run hot and dry – particularly east of the Cascade Mountains. This winter, temperatures soared 5.6 degrees above normal in the region, leading to record-low snowpack, and to stream runoff that peaked, in many places, in the dead of February. In March, Inslee declared a statewide drought emergency in Washington. By June, the snowpack was just…gone.

"This drought is unlike any we've ever experienced," Maia Bellon, the director of Washington state's Department of Ecology, said in May. It has primed the region to burn. Susan Prichard, a fire ecologist at the University of Washington, says the sudden drying of overgrown forests created a "perfect storm" for big fires in eastern Oregon and Washington. "It leads us," she says, "to a tinderbox situation."

The warming air is sucking the forests dry – literally. Man-made higher temperatures increase the atmosphere's appetite for moisture; Williams, the Columbia climate scientist, jokes that the effect is like a Mafia shakedown, with the air constantly demanding more water from the land. In wet years, the atmosphere's increased thirst doesn't matter much. But in times of drought, this tax on the water system is significant and damaging. "That cost is now becoming large enough that it's really detectable," Williams says, "and it's reducing water availability for humans and ecosystems."

Joe Casola, deputy director of the Climate Impacts Group at the University of Washington, points to the future. This year's combination of warm winter, low snowpack, early runoff, hot summer and fire is straight from the textbook – "a good preview," he says, of what climate models tell us will soon be commonplace. "These are the conditions we're likely to be facing several decades from now and going forward."

Dangerous Smoke Sweeps the U.S.

Winds blew acrid smoke from Western fires as far as Atlanta, creating hazardous air quality. "The particulates affect global climate," says Bob Keane, a fire scientist. "It changes temperature patterns." JACOB BAYNHAM



According to current EPA projections, April snowpack in the Cascades will shrink by as much as 40 percent by 2040. "Higher summer temperatures, earlier spring snow melt and potential reductions in summer soil moisture would contribute to wildfire risk," the agency concludes.

By 2080, according to the National Climate Assessment, the median acreage burned in Pacific Northwest wildfires is likely to quadruple. So what does that mean on the ground? Instead of a once-in-20-years event, the type of megafires now ravaging Oregon and Washington could be expected to occur one year out of every two.

If fire is inevitable, there's a glint of good news: America can get much smarter about how it fights wildfire, by making simple changes to the funding of the Forest Service. "We all agree that the way wildfire management has been funded is broken," Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski said in August. "It is past time that we fix it."

With surprising ease, you can track climate change in the portion of the Forest Service budget that's spent fighting fire. In 1995, it was only 16 percent. This year – for the first time ever – more than 50 percent of the budget will go to firefighting. Ten years from now, the agency projects, these costs will balloon to become two-thirds of the budget.

The situation has become so dire that the Forest Service now robs its fire-prevention budget – money for clearing brush, thinning forests and conducting "prescribed burns" that help prevent future megablazes – just to fund its firefighting. The exploding cost of combating fire is "crippling…the very programs and restoration projects that reduce the fire threat," the agency reports.

In its wisdom, Congress has set the Forest Service budget on the basis of a 10-year average cost. That formula worked well enough with a more stable climate. But the agency has been saddled with ever-increasing, and increasingly costly, megafire. "The six worst fire seasons since 1960," the agency reported in August, "have all occurred since 2000."

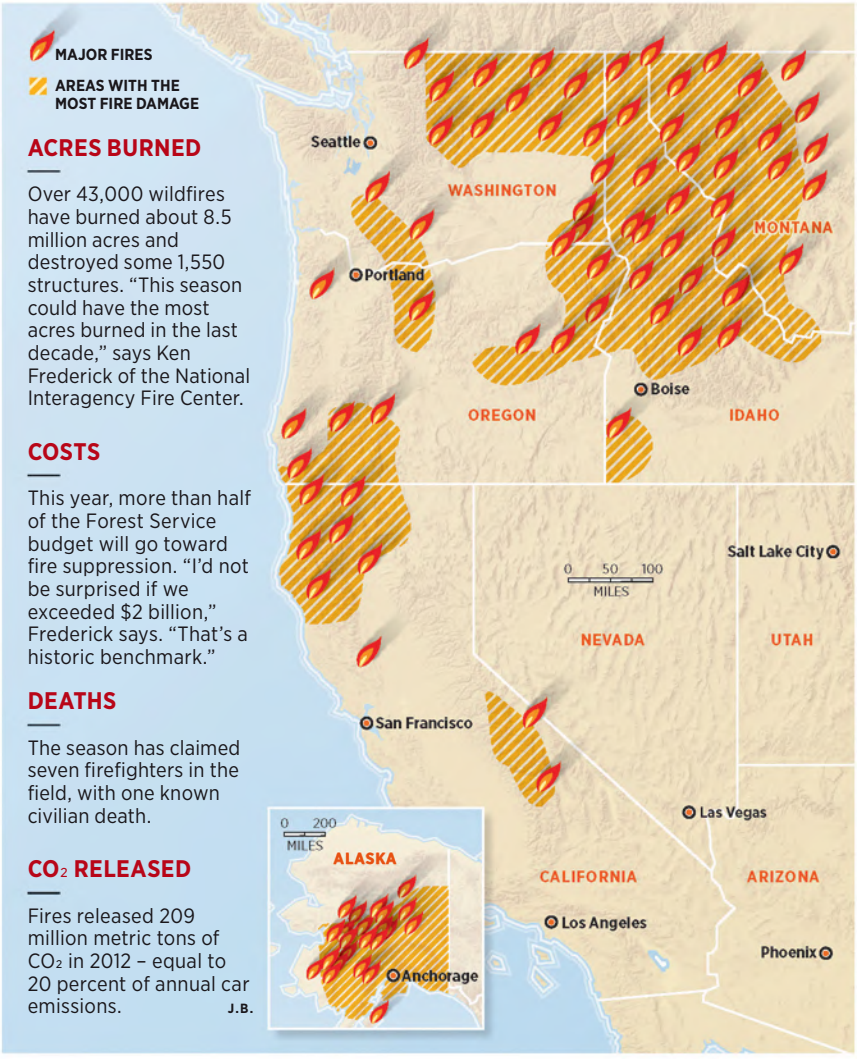
With the Northwest ablaze, Congress is responding. The reform effort is championed by Western lawmakers, including, ironically, Republicans who have either denied climate change exists, like Sen. Mike Enzi of Wyoming, or fought controls on greenhouse gases, like Rep. Mike Simpson of Idaho.

Simpson's Wildfire Disaster Funding Act would decouple the agency's budget from the cost of fighting megafires. Only one percent of blazes are now driving 30 percent of costs. Under Simpson's plan,

Contributing editor Tim Dickinson *wrote about prison reform in July.*

Wildfires Rage Across the Northwest

A detailed look at the 2015 fire season – one of the worst on record



ACRES BURNED

Over 43,000 wildfires have burned about 8.5 million acres and destroyed some 1,550 structures. "This season could have the most acres burned in the last decade," says Ken Frederick of the National Interagency Fire Center.

COSTS

This year, more than half of the Forest Service budget will go toward fire suppression. "I'd not be surprised if we exceeded $2 billion," Frederick says. "That's a historic benchmark."

DEATHS

The season has claimed seven firefighters in the field, with one known civilian death.

CO_2 RELEASED

Fires released 209 million metric tons of CO_2 in 2012 – equal to 20 percent of annual car emissions. J.B.

fighting megafires would instead be funded out of the $12 billion federal disaster relief fund – the same kitty that FEMA taps when it provides relief from hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes and other natural disasters.

Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden, a Democrat, is insisting he'll push the issue to the forefront when Congress reconvenes this month. "My first order of business," he said, "is to end the terrible trifecta that makes these fires worse: underfunding firefighting budgets, stealing money from fire prevention to make up the shortfall and letting hazardous fuels build up as a result."

As the nation reframes its thinking about wildfire – from the routine natural burns of 50 years ago to today's climate-aggravated megablazes – it is crucial not to overlook the worst-case scenario: a major metropolis engulfed in fire.

America has seen previews of this catastrophe: In 1991, a wildfire swept into the hills and canyons above Oakland, overwhelming firefighters, claiming 25 lives, injuring 150 other people and causing more than $1.5 billion in property damage. The 2003 Cedar Fire, driven by Southern California's fierce Santa Ana winds, scorched more than 280,000 acres. The worst fire in the state record books, the October blaze reached into the suburbs of San Diego, burning more than 2,200 homes. Wildfire hit again in 2007, forcing thousands of residents to take refuge in Qualcomm Stadium, the venue where the NFL's Chargers play.

In a small blessing, the record fire season in the Pacific Northwest this summer has been relatively limited in its human and financial costs. The affected region is sparsely populated forest and rangeland, separated from Seattle and Portland by a major mountain range. But the fires' secondary effects on these cities shouldn't be discounted: In late August, shifting winds funneled dangerous smoke from multiple fires down through the Columbia Gorge, temporarily turning Portland into a smoke box. Particulate concentrations in the city's air reached "unhealthy" levels usually not seen outside Beijing.

But in the big picture, America was lucky that wildfire hadn't struck the parched hills of Silicon Valley, or swept down through Colorado's Front Range into the suburbs west of Denver. Indeed, Northern California skirted disaster in July. The Rocky Fire – sparked by a decrepit water heater – threatened the city of Clear Lake, north of the state's fabled Napa Valley, ripping through 70,000 acres, jumping a highway and subjecting 13,000 residents to evacuation orders. Ken Pimlott, the director of CAL Fire, the state's fire authority, says California still faces "unprecedented fire behavior and fuel conditions" and that the worst of the fire season is likely "yet to come" in Southern California. "We haven't dodged a bullet by any stretch of the imagination," he says.

California Gov. Jerry Brown has recently been calling out the Republican presidential candidates who refuse to even acknowledge that climate change exists. "Longer fire seasons, extreme weather and severe droughts aren't on the horizon," he wrote in an open letter to GOP candidates. "They're all here – and here to stay."

With a lightning strike or an arsonist's match, the fire next time could threaten San Jose, San Diego or the L.A. Basin – each a major engine of the national economy. At its most dangerous, warming-driven wildfire poses an existential threat. "The climate is unstable," Brown told reporters in August. "If the drought was to continue for a year or several years, California could literally burn up."

Maps by John Grimwade

"I'm owned by the people. I'm no angel, but I'm going to do right by them."

Trump Seriously

By PAUL SOLOTAROFF

Photograph by MARK SELIGER

"HEY, YA MADE IT, great to see ya!" says Donald Trump, having just stepped aboard his throne room of a plane and stopping by my seat to extend his hand. "You get the big tour yet? No? What the hell? C'mon, I'll show you myself." ⋆ I follow him into the stateroom of the 757, past three rows of sleeper seats wrapped in eggshell calfskin, with seat-belt buckles of plated gold and the family crest stitched in every headrest; past the conference center, with its mahogany table and a dozen executive high-backs snugged around it; past the in-plane theater, with its oyster-shape couches and the 57-inch flatscreen tuned to Fox; past the bumped-out bulkhead



THE FRONT-RUNNER
"I don't start these fights, but I sure as hell win them," Trump says of Fox News.

and the first of two bedrooms, this one fitted with mohair couches that convert to a full-size bed; and then the master bedroom, with its silk-spun walls and bathroom fixtures finished in rosy gold.

"Not bad, you agree?" calls Trump over his shoulder, leading me down the corridor to the cockpit. "I bought this from Paul Allen and gutted it top to bottom. It's bigger than Air Force One, which is a step down from this in every way. Rolls-Royce engines; seats 43. Didja know it was featured on the Discovery Channel as the world's most luxurious jetliner?" (Fact-check: It isn't bigger than Air Force One, and it was featured on the Smithsonian Channel. But in this, as in much of what Trump says, it's more about the broad strokes than the details.)

After takeoff, I find him in the stateroom, reading notes. "Gotta concentrate," he says. "I'm speaking in front of thousands. After the rally, we'll have plenty of time to talk."

> **"I'm at the point in my life where I could do *anything*. I said, 'I'm going to take the risk of running for president.'"**

This seems fair, though we've spent hours in his office and haven't gotten around yet to a single policy question, beyond his assurance that we'd touch on "all that stuff" later. I buckle in to watch the campaign coverage when he asks me if I know what inversions are. "Uh, no," I say, thinking I'm in for a tutorial about wind patterns at 30,000 feet. "It's when companies leave America and take thousands of good jobs with 'em. What do ya think of that, does that sound fair?" he says.

"Well, no, it doesn't. But what would you do about it in your first hundred days?"

"Yeah, I gotta remind myself to talk about that tonight. But I'm busy now! I really gotta prep!" He burrows into his notes, marking a section in ballpoint. Not 60 seconds pass before he looks at me again. "You know New Hampshire has a huge problem with heroin? Why do ya s'pose that is?"

I tell him that it probably has to do with OxyContin and school kids raiding their parents' medicine chests. They run out of pills, then find that bags of heroin are cheaper. "Yeah? Well, which is worse for you, the heroin or the pills?" I explain that they're both derivatives of opium, which is dicey however it's delivered. "Hunh!" he says. "Interesting. I didn't know that. But I gotta get back to my notes!" (At a press conference, an hour later, he'll respond to a question about heroin in New Hampshire by saying that "it starts probably with OxyContin, from what I'm hearing.") Sixty seconds pass. "Hey, you believe this goddamn ISIS? Chopping people's heads off, putting people in cages and drowning 'em. We gotta waterboard 'em, don't you agree?"

I tell him I'm not in favor of chopping people's heads off, and ask if he'd sanction waterboarding as president. He begins a rambling answer, then asks the woman across from me if she believes in the practice of waterboarding. And so it goes for the 26 minutes it takes us to fly from New York to Hampton, New Hampshire, where tonight he'll go on in front of 2,500 people, a crowd to thoroughly dwarf the several hundred people who've turned out to watch Jeb Bush and Rand Paul speak in the state. In those 26 minutes, he'll devote some 90 seconds to his typewritten notes, diverted instead by the mentions of him on Fox and the crowd of whims and tangents in his head. To sit alone with Trump is to be whipsawed and head-snapped by his sentences that start and stop, his thoughts that take hard detours or suddenly become questions in midstream. But as I learn in Hampton, exactly none of this will matter once Donald Trump takes the stage. The second those klieg lights hit him, he'll find his maestro voice, that nimble and knowing schoolyard brogue that doesn't miss a trick or a chance to pounce. Besides, he'll say the exact same unscripted things he said in Michigan days earlier and will say again tomorrow at the Iowa State Fair, all of it word for word from memory. You may lament Trump's message, but you can't move him off it. It's like trying to stop a 757.

Contributing editor Paul Solotaroff *wrote about Dez Bryant in the last issue.*

This past June, Donald John Trump rode down the escalator in the five-story, pink-marble atrium of Manhattan's Trump Tower to declare his candidacy for president of the United States. Since then, he has been mocked and reviled, worshipped and courted, and, till very lately, dismissed as a fever dream of the torch-and-pitchfork segment of the Republican Party. Entering stage far-right with wing-nut invective – the people coming across our border are "rapists" and "killers" who routinely commit "great amounts of crime" – he has dominated the race since the day he got in it and posted a large and durable lead ever since. The caveat: His negatives are through the roof. About a third of registered Republicans likely to vote next year say they'd never pull the lever for him.

In all the hysteria, however, what's often missed are the qualities that brought Trump here. You don't do a *fraction* of what he's done in life – dominate New York real estate for decades, build the next grand Xanadus for the super-rich on the far shores of Dubai and Istanbul, run the prime-time ratings table for more than 10 years and earn a third (or sixth) fortune at it – without being immensely cunning and deft, a top-of-the-food-chain killer. Over the course of 10 days and several close-in encounters, I got to peer behind the scrim of his bluster and self-mythos and get a very good look at the man. What I saw was enough to make me take him dead serious. If you're waiting for Trump to blow himself up in a Hindenburg of gaffes or hate speech, you're in for a long, cold fall and winter. Donald Trump is here for the duration – and gaining strength and traction by the hour.

Begin with his message and mode of delivery. Standing over his shoulder, I watched Trump use the press to speak directly to his base, talking past the cameras and microphone banks to that furious demographic of working and out-of-work factory-town families who saw their wages set like Quikrete in the 1980s and watched the spoils and tax breaks swim upstream. When we landed in New Hampshire and pulled in to a Hampton high school in his motorcade of stretch SUVs, Trump was mobbed by reporters with the pushy fervor of kids seeking autographs at spring training. He batted aside their questions – Iraq, Russia, immigrants – to buttonhole the hundreds of people milling outside, unable to get in but listening on speakers, and the thousands more seated down the hall.

"I built a net worth of more than $10 billion. I've been a world-class businessman.…That's the thinking that our country needs. Take our jobs back from China and Japan and Mexico.…Take a look at China.…We owe them $1.4 trillion…because we're led by people who don't have a clue. Honestly, I think we're led by stupid people."

There, in those words, is his campaign. *I am strong; politicians are weak. I speak truth and never retreat; they lie and wave the white flag to our foes. They have stripped us bare; I will build us back, make this country feared the whole world*



THE CAMPAIGNER
Trump in Alabama. He has a simple message: *I am strong; politicians are weak.*

over. Everything he utters is a version of this, dressed in different raiment or reference – and he's saying it to people, his "silent majority," who have longed to hear these words since Richard Nixon. "He's delivering a message of power and courage without any proof points called *policy,*" says Steve Schmidt, the Republican wise man and campaign warhorse who's been watching Trump with mounting fascination. "A huge chunk of conservatives are unmoored from the issues. What moves them is his tone and attack on Republicans who they hold in *complete* contempt."

In the airless auditorium, the faithful are packed so tight that it feels like a breeding barn with a PA system. They are the young and the old, the blue- and white-collar, the white and, well, white-haired. He has a pitch-perfect ear for their curdled resentment and a ventriloquist's gift for reading it back to them in words that they think but cannot utter at work, or anywhere else but their kitchen tables. Canvassing the crowd before he comes on, I hear the same phrases over and over. "Finally, someone's saying what *we've all* wanted to say – we've been pushed too far for years," says Tina, a gym-toned mom in a sleeveless top. "I like that he's not politically correct – we don't have time for that here," says Lise, a frost-tipped blonde in the row behind her, calling Trump "another Ronald Reagan." "He means what he says, and says what he means," says a converted Democrat named Dino. "The other guys, they got marbles in their mouth – you don't even know *what* they're saying."

Trump takes the stage to a standing ovation. His speech goes the way it always goes. "They had 24 million people [at the debate the other night]. . . . Do you think they were there for . . . Rand *Paul*? Rand, I've had you up to here!" He touches his armpit, zinging the vertically challenged Paul: "He didn't like it when I said you have to pass an IQ test to get up on the stage." Then he pivoted to Carly Fiorina. "Carly was a little nasty to me – be *careful,* Carly! Be *careful*! But I can't say anything to her because she's a woman. . . . I *promised* that I wouldn't say that she ran Hewlett-Packard into the ground. I said I wouldn't say it! That her stock value tanked. That she laid off tens of thousands of people, and she got viciously fired. I said I will not *say* that. And that she then went out and ran against Barbara *Boxer,* and . . . lost in a landslide. And I said, 'I. Will. Not. Say. That!'"

The enormous audience leaps to its feet in eruptive, rocking laughter. And for 58 minutes, he goes on like this, playing the crowd like a Telecaster. *Mexico's taking your jobs. Ford and Nabisco are fleeing there. No more Oreos for Trump!* What's most striking is the ease with which Trump does it – no note cards, no teleprompter, no prep in the car. Running his first race for office at 69, an age when other men are seeking help for bladder conditions, he gives every impression of being born for this – and of having the time of his life.

A week or so earlier, I'd been summoned to Trump's office at his glitter-bomb cathedral, Trump Tower. It is hard to overstate the effect of the building on your sense of dimension and place. You walk into a lobby that is half-Vegas, half-Vatican, a vaulting altar of brass and obsidian that soars halfway to heaven, where they serve dark-roast. There's a Starbucks somewhere up in the sky-high atrium, not far from the 60-foot waterfall. You fight the urge to dunk your head in the pool where it collects, and try, instead, to regain your wits on the whooshing ride up to the 26th floor.

There, you are met by the first in a series of dazzling young female assistants. Trump also likes the theatrics of beauty. Many of his close aides are women in their twenties not very long removed from college. Hope Hicks, Trump's communications director who, several years ago, was studying at Southern Methodist Univer-

PREVIOUS SPREAD: PRODUCED BY RUTH LEVY. THIS PAGE: JEFF HALLER/*THE NEW YORK TIMES*/REDUX

sity, leads me into the boss's office, which is as much Trump's trophy room as workspace. Every flat surface is adorned by his image: framed magazine glossies from Important Publications, none more so, at least per Trump, than the 1990 *Playboy* where "I was one of the only men to ever get on the cover."

Trump offers me a seat by his mahogany desk. Over his shoulder looms a bust of Ronald Reagan. (There is also a bald eagle, the stuffed-animal version, for any preschool patriot who wanders in.) In an earlier sit-down, Trump had fought me to a standstill when I tried to draw him out about his past. As countless writers before me have discovered to their sorrow, there's no such thing as question-and-answer with Trump. Instead, you frame a query, then stand back and watch him go, hoping that in the monologue that follows, he touches at least obliquely on your topic. This time, he did divulge about his father, going on at length and with real feeling. Fred Trump, the second in a line of self-made magnates (his father, Friedrich, had earned his fortune in the Klondike gold rush, selling lodging, food, booze and possibly women to hordes of miners), was possessed of the singular family gift: He could see the future and beat everyone else to it.

"When the car was just coming out, houses had no garages," says Trump. "Dad went all over Queens, building garages in the Thirties, and he could throw 'em up like nothing. He had great energy and vision, worked seven days a week and liked it, and was happy in his life. I watched people take vacations, and they're *miserable*. Him, two hours at the beach with us on Sundays, and he was back to work."

Fred was among the first of the great wartime developers to figure out the import of Federal Housing Authority programs, vast new pots of government loans to build housing for the working- and middle-class. Trump doesn't volunteer that much of the family fortune derived from taxpayer funds, or that his father was a master manipulator of the Democratic machine in Brooklyn. Fred's *real* money was made erecting outer-borough housing for the returning vets of World War II, brick behemoths that he delivered on schedule and hundreds of thousands of dollars under budget.

Though Fred lived and died a very rich man, he made his kids work like peasants. The three boys spent summers pulling weeds and pouring cement, learning the building trade from the subfloor up, while the two girls toiled in his real estate office in the bowels of Coney Island. Trump tells the story of being dragged by the nose to join Fred on his rounds collecting rents. "We'd go on jobs where you needed tough guys to knock on doors," he says. "You'd see 'em ring the bell and stand way over here. I'd say, 'Why're you over there?' and he'd say, ''Cause these motherfuckers *shoot*! They shoot right through the door!'"





FORTUNATE SON
Trump with his father, Fred, a real-estate tycoon. After getting in trouble in middle school, Trump was sent to New York Military Academy.

Trump has raised his own kids in comparable fashion, disabusing them of any notions of unearned grandeur. "I was a dock attendant for a couple of summers, then went into landscaping," says Don Jr., a company vice president running international projects, with an office directly below his father's. "My brother and I are probably the only sons of billionaires who can operate a D-10 Caterpillar." "I did less-than-glamorous internships in sweltering New York – the South of France wasn't an option," says Ivanka in her immaculate office next door to Don Jr. Together with Eric, the third of Trump's kids by his first wife, Ivana Trump (he has two younger children by subsequent wives), his three grown offspring handle his vast portfolio of luxury hotels and resorts. Polished and restrained where their father is flamboyant, they've nonetheless paid him the highest praise by enlisting in the family trade. No less telling, none of them are train wrecks like so many children of billionaires. "We grew up with a lot of those kids and know them well," says Don Jr. "But I guess we were pushed and motivated differently."

It's worth noting that Trump was nearly a train wreck himself as the son of wealth in Jamaica Estates, Queens. An indifferent student who was "mouthing off to everybody" and carrying around a switchblade in his pocket, he was yanked out of prep school by his disappointed parents and sent to the New York Military Academy upstate. "He thought he was Mr. America and the world revolved around him," says Col. Ted Dobias, his former instructor and baseball coach, a barrel-chested man who's now nearing 90 but whose memory is diamond-drill sharp. "I had a lot of one-on-ones" with the 14-year-old Trump, adds Dobias, some of which got physical, both men say. Whatever it took to seize the eighth-grader's attention, Dobias seemed to turn him around. By ninth grade, Trump was a model cadet; as a senior, he made cadet captain, says Dobias, and was the star first baseman for Dobias' varsity squad. "He was good-hit *and* good-field: We had scouts from the Phillies to watch him, but he wanted to go to college and make real money."

After graduating from Wharton, where his academic laurels have been grossly overstated through the years (he didn't finish first in his class or anywhere near it, and went altogether missing from the list of honors for the class of 1968), Trump began working for his old man in Brooklyn, but had little sustaining interest in low-rent units. What he wanted was to have his name writ large on the next iconic towers of Manhattan. It was the mid-1970s, when the city was swirling the drain of insolvency and structural collapse, but even from the boroughs, Trump could look ahead a decade to the gilded age of the 1980s. Seizing upon the collapse of the Penn Central railroad, the largest corpo-

FROM TOP: COURTESY OF DONALD TRUMP; SETH POPPELL/YEARBOOK LIBRARY

rate bankruptcy in history at the time, he scooped up an option to redo the Commodore Hotel, a Beaux Arts colossus gone badly to seed as one of the troubled railroad's minor holdings.

"The area was dying, people were leaving the city, but I went to Bowery Bank across the street and said, 'If you lend me the money, 42nd Street is gonna be great again,'" Trump says. Bowery and a second firm, Equitable Life, staked tens of millions of dollars on the reconstruction. Trump strong-armed City Hall to give him an unheard-of break – full tax abatement for 40 years – and stripped the old girl of her limestone vestments, dressing her in dazzling skirts of glass. Reborn as the Grand Hyatt in 1980, the building – a great mirrored beacon to investors eager to pounce on midtown projects – came along just as the stock market soared, minting a brash generation of new millionaires.

Those young-money turks burned to tweak their stodgy fathers by flashing their sudden wealth on shiny objects. Trump built them the gold-dust condos of their dreams, converting the dowdy Gulf and Western in Columbus Circle into a brass-and-glass playpen for Wall Street flyboys, after setting his style template with Trump Tower. That building helped revive Fifth Avenue, which, like many of New York's former talismans, had fallen into sad decline. It was also a benchmark moment for Trump: the accomplishment with which he officially eclipsed Fred as the signature builder of his age.

"So here's a story I've never told," he says, warming to the memory of that triumph. "When I was building Trump Tower, my father stood across the street and said, 'Don't use glass and bronze, use *brick*. It's better, less expensive, and no one cares about the outside. All they care about is the size of the *closets*!'" Trump laughs and shakes his head in mordant wonder, as if to say, *Oh, the humanity.* By the way, Trump has told this story many times, according to Gwenda Blair, the author of *Donald Trump: Master Apprentice,* which will be reissued as an e-book this fall. "It's all part of what he does," she says, "the bragging and the repetition: It's called *branding,* and he's relentless at it."

Trump springs from his desk chair and summons me over to the floor-to-ceiling windows facing north. Below us, beyond the Tiffany Building and the Plaza Hotel, spreads the splendid sine qua non of Central Park, lush in its summer coat of greens and golds. "I mean, who *has* this location? I *own* this," says Trump, marveling at his great good fortune. "I'm at the point in my life – tremendous cash flow, very little debt – where I could do anything I want. I said, 'Now, I'm gonna take the risk of running for president. We need that kinda mind to make great deals.'"

As we stand there, hundreds of feet above New York, gazing on the Lilliputian tourists, it occurs to me to wonder: How on Earth, from *this* vantage, did Trump see into the hearts of underemployed white folk? How did he know that they stewed and simmered over free trade, immigrants and fat-cat Republicans who'd sold them down the river for decades? How did he guess that they'd conflated those things to explain the flight of factory jobs, and that all they really cared about, besides the return of those jobs, was that someone beat the hell out of the party hacks – the Jeb Bushes and Scott Walkers and Karl Roves?

"What you've tapped into," I say, "is that people see those guys and say, '*This* one's owned by David Koch, *that* one's owned by Sheldon Adelson, and so on, and then they look at you…"

"I'm owned by the *people*!" Trump says. "I mean, I'm telling you, I'm no angel, but I'm gonna do right by them!"

But the answer to my question is ringing in the air – specifically, in the echo of Trump's accent. He was raised around lunch-pail guys in Queens and learned to talk like them trailing his father to building sites. He shares the syntax and sympathies of meat-and-potatoes types, and has crafted his message for their ears expressly, calling out the enemies on their list. In New Hampshire, I watched that huge crowd come to a boil as he took dead aim at corporate greed. "When the head of Ford calls me up and he says, 'Mr. President, we really want to build this plant in Mexico,' I'll say, 'Congratulations…we're gonna charge you a 35 percent tax *on every car and truck and part* that comes in!' 'But you can't *dooo* that, Mr. President!' Trust me, I *can* do it – and what happens is, they probably fold by 5 p.m."

Never mind the pipe-dream scenario being spun, which omits that only Congress can set new taxes: The whole room shakes as if on skates. That mind-meld is what lets him flaunt his wealth and sell it as proof he's on their side. He bragged in New Hampshire about his *great* relations with China and Saudi Arabia: "They all buy apartments from me. They pay millions and millions of dollars. Am I supposed to hate them? I love them! I sell apartments for $50 million, $30 million, $25 million, $18 million, some of the cheap ones, like $10 *million,* OK? Those are the cheap ones. I don't even sign *those* contracts." Why would he run the jewels in the faces of people who're largely living from check to check? To pound home the point that there are good tycoons, patriotic wise men like himself and his friends (Carl Icahn and Henry Kravis, to name just two) who are itching to step in and save the country's bacon by rewriting its woeful trade deals with China and Japan. "Do we want nice people? Or do we want these horrible human beings negotiating for us? I want horrible.…We will make great trade deals. We will make Social Security without cuts.…You'll have phenomenal plans – you'll have them for much less money. The insurance companies will not be happy, but, see, they don't give me money. They give to Jeb, and they give to Hillary.…I don't want their money!"

That assault on the *bad* rich, the takers and job exporters, is the second masterstroke of his campaign. He's not just spurning their money, he's spilling the beans on them, outing the ways in which they've gamed the system to enrich themselves and co-opt the Republican Party. "Because he knows Wall Street and because he doesn't need its money to campaign, it seems like he could actually fight his fellow elites and win," wrote Ross Douthat in an op-ed piece for *The New York Times* titled "Donald Trump, Traitor to His Class."

"I have senators flying in from Washington to New York, and I gave to *everybody,*" says Trump in his office. "Why?

"So far I've spent zero. I'm on TV so much, it'd be stupid to advertise. Remember: The two biggest costs are ads and transportation. So I'd say I'm pretty well covered, wouldn't you?"

Because that was *business*: When I went to see them, they were always nice. If I'd said no, then went back to them and said I needed help on a tax code – *zero* chance; they'd say, '*Fuck him*!' That's not a good thing for our country, but that's the system, and the public understands it better than anybody."

Nor do his conservative heresies stop there. He's called for immediate tax hikes on hedge-fund profits; tax hikes for the ultrawealthy like himself to pay for sweeping cuts for the middle class; vast spending increases on health care in general and for veterans and women in particular; huge capital investments in the country's infrastructure, beginning with roads and bridges; and a wartime-era ramp-up of the Defense Department budget to "make our military so strong that nobody would mess with us." How would he plow such mandates through a Congress that is run by the very party he's betraying? And where does he find the money to do these things when he himself says we're nearing the point of no return on a deficit of $19 trillion? His answer on this and all matters fiscal is the canard about capital clawbacks: "I'd renegotiate trade deals so that our country becomes rich again," he says, "and end deals where car manufacturers go to other countries. I'm gonna have them built right here." For the moment, though, the "how" is beside the point. What counts is that he's hijacked the party's base out from under the noses of its bosses, taken it clean away from Jeb Bush and Karl Rove and stashed it in a place they'll never find it. If nothing else comes of his remarkable run, he'll have done us all a priceless favor, showing the angry right that the Republican Party is run by, for and about the very rich.

To this point, at least, it's been an asymmetrical war: Trump carpet-bombs his rivals each and every day without much in the way of artillery coming back. But sooner rather than later, the counterinsurgency will start, a coordinated effort by the party's elites to trash him and his scary ideas. "Trump's challenge is, he's got an unusual coalition – Tea Party Republicans, *non*-Tea Party Republicans and even some Democrats," says Nate Cohn, the standout data journalist for *The New York Times*. "What happens when he starts getting attacked on all the issues? Will he be able to hold his supporters together under the brunt of attack ads from the Super PACs?"

Cohn isn't convinced that Trump's constituency will see him through that thresher and beyond. "He's had total command of the media so far, and much of his strength is based on that. But popularity derived from public attention is generally thin, as we saw with Herman Cain and Sarah Palin."

Steve Schmidt, the Republican strategist, puts it somewhat more crudely: "Trump's starring in a reality show of his own making, and treats every appearance like an episode," chasing ratings in the form of fresh votes. But how do you turn appointment TV into a lasting candidacy? "You need a huge team on the ground doing the nuts-and-bolts work – collecting signatures to be on the ballot in certain states, bringing voters to the polls – and Trump is very late to the party," says Cohn. "Most of his rivals have been at this over a year, and have those seasoned operatives locked up. And even if they're available, is he really prepared to pay them a premium now?"

> **"I had senators flying in to New York, and I gave to *everybody*. That's not a good thing, but that's the system."**

The first time we met, Trump led me to understand that his run had cost him peanuts thus far. A little outlay for jet fuel and salary to staff events, but not a dime dropped on advertising or charters. "I thought I'd have spent $10 million on ads, when so far I've spent zero," he says. "I'm on TV so much, it'd be stupid to advertise. Besides, the shows are more effective than ads." But with a commanding national lead at the end of August and runaway margins in the early primary states of New Hampshire and South Carolina, he's had to staff up aggressively on the fly. To that end, he's dispatched his campaign manager, Corey Lewandowski, to speed-hire ground troops across the country, pros who'll try to turn his rock-star crowds into follow-through voters in six months. He's brought on Chuck Laudner, an old hand in Iowa politics, to run his operation in that state, and had ramped up months ago in South Carolina and New Hampshire, putting strong, seasoned crews to work.

"We're up to 60 people now, including 14 in Iowa," Trump tells me, "and building huge, phenomenal teams in the first seven states. I know that costs money, but I've got this, believe me. Remember: The two biggest costs in a presidential run are ads and transportation. Well, I own two planes and a Sikorsky chopper, so I'd say I'm pretty well covered there, wouldn't you?"

Still: Trump, for all his billions, has far less sitting in liquid assets. Bloomberg ran the numbers on his FEC filing and pegged his cash on hand at $70 million; Politico had it closer to $250 million. Either way, it sounds like a lot of money till you factor the per-diem costs of the past couple of presidential cycles. Barack Obama spent about $1.6 million a day at this stage of his first run, in 2007. The price tag may have doubled in the eight years since, though Trump has the cost breaks noted above, so perhaps it'll only run him the million per. But Obama was raising money as fast as he spent it, while Trump is barely bothering to lift a finger. (At last report, he'd taken in $100,000, or about five percent of what he's spent already.) Is he really prepared to shell out $30 million a month, and more when the primaries roll around?

"*Absolutely*," he tells me. "I'm prepared to underwrite this! I make $400 to $600 *million* a year."

Last year, per the figures he himself released, he had $362 million in income, some of that a one-time sale of stocks. This year figures to be a slimmer one: He was summarily dropped by seven business partners when he entered the race raging against "illegals." Per media estimates, he lost as much as $50 million in those canceled deals, the bulk of it from NBC, his golden goose. It's been a very pricey couple of months indeed for him, and that goes against the flow of his business model. Since the bad old days of the early Nineties, when the real estate market tanked and his company filed for Chapter 11, owing the banks nearly $1 billion, he's been much more reluctant to invest hard cash. He owns very little of what gets built now bearing his name, earning many tens of millions by leasing his logo to high-end hotels and resorts. He also reaps license fees from retail products that pretty much cover the spectrum from clothes to liquor, though he's lost the great buzz machine that was *The Apprentice*, and with it, the multi-million-dollar salary that earned him $213 million over 14 years.

But politics isn't like selling vodka that someone else makes and mass-distributes. It's the ultimate high-risk, low-return endeavor, in which $5 billion will be spent, in total, this cycle, most of it by candidates with slim hopes. Will Trump go all-in on his bet with himself, selling off assets as he goes? Or will he turn at some point to the people he denounces – the hedge-fund guys and influence-peddlers who fund the

Super PACs of his rivals – and quietly make his terms with them? If so, what becomes of the clenched-fist crowds he's been drawing in record numbers at every stop? Here is the bind Trump finds himself in as he buckles down to a long and arduous run. He has carved his mark as the exception to every rule: the teller of dark truths; the man too rich to bribe. Any deviation, any hint of half-stepping, will cost him far more than it would, say, Bush or Ted Cruz. Why? Because Trump's central claim is *he's not them*. The day his backers doubt that is the day he starts unraveling. They've been burned too many times to grant second chances.

AFTER THE HAMPTON RALLY, Trump is so exultant he practically floats the 10 miles back to his plane. On the tarmac, he hands out $100 bills to the drivers of his motorcade, and profusely shakes the hands of his advance-team members, some of whom, he says, will return to the school to collect names and cellphone numbers of folks still there. "You'd be amazed," Trump tells me. "These people get so excited that they stick around for *hours* afterward."

He parks himself at the dining table in the center of the big plane's cabin, turns on the massive flat-panel unit that is preset to Fox News and watches reports of the speech he's just given, while wolfing down a takeout dinner. Onscreen, it is wall-to-wall coverage of Trump, though none of it is mediated by Megyn Kelly, the network's golden girl and homegrown star. A week after the Republican debate, in which she'd taken on Trump and tried to gore him over his caddish remarks about women, she'd gone missing from the conversation, vanishing to her beach house till late August. In the sweet but too-brief battle between Trump and the network that followed his ugly dust-up with Kelly, Trump had emerged from it the walk-off winner after staring down Roger Ailes, the Fox News chief. During his four-day boycott of the station, he pumped up the ratings of its rival networks by appearing on their shows and savaging Fox, and escalated his all-out war on Kelly with the crack about her bloody "wherever." Ultimately, peace broke out, and Ailes brought him back on. Trump's return, on Sean Hannity's show, drove ratings back up, beating out the competition several times over. It devolved into a victory lap for Trump, but even in triumph, he couldn't keep the truce. In his office, Trump slipped me a printout of a story titled "How Roger Ailes Picked Trump, and Fox News' Audience, Over Megyn Kelly." "I don't start these fights, but I sure as hell win them," he told me.

And that is Trump all over: He can't-stop-won't-stop whaling away at anyone who dares to bait him. The day after Kelly returned from exile, Trump trashed her afresh with snarks and retweets, refusing to give Kelly peace. This is the other thing he learned from his father, who taught his sons to "*attack, attack, attack*," says Blair, the biographer. "He's constantly on offense, picking massive fights, and it always results in polling spikes," says Matt Boyle, a correspondent for Breitbart News, the only other writer on Trump's plane. Riding the campaign trail since the middle of last year with Ben Carson, Cruz and others, Boyle marveled at Trump's skill for fomenting fights, which kept him atop the news cycle every day. "And Fox, John McCain, they always respond to him," which brings the media back a second day and sucks up all the inches on Page One. How do Bush et al. fight back against a puncher whose arms never seem to get tired? "They haven't figured it out yet, and they're blowing up in front of us," says Boyle. "This guy here, he's just at a different level."



THE HEIRS
Ivanka, Eric (center) and Don Jr. "We are probably the only sons of billionaires who can operate a D-10 Caterpillar," says Don.

With his blue tie loosened and slung over his shoulder, Trump sits back to digest his meal and provide a running byplay to the news. Onscreen, they've cut away to a spot with Scott Walker, the creaky-robot governor of Wisconsin. Praised by the anchor for his "slow but steady" style, Walker is about to respond when Trump chimes in, "Yeah, he's slow, all right! That's what we *got* already: *slowwww*." His staffers at the conference table howl and hoot; their man, though, is just getting warm. When the anchor throws to Carly Fiorina for her reaction to Trump's momentum, Trump's expression sours in schoolboy disgust as the camera bores in on Fiorina. "*Look* at that face!" he cries. "Would anyone *vote* for that? Can you imagine that, the face of our next *president*?!" The laughter grows halting and faint behind him. "I mean, she's a woman, and I'm not s'posedta say bad things, but really, folks, come on. Are we *serious*?"

And there, in a nutshell, is Trump's blessing and his curse: He can't seem to quit while he's ahead. The instincts that carried him out to a lead and have kept him far above the captious field are the same ones that landed him in ugly stews with ex-wives, business partners, networks, supermodels and many, many other famous women. At 69, he can still carry on like the teen who was yanked out of prep school and delivered to Col. Dobias, the take-no-shit instructor at the military academy. After I met Ivanka and praised her to her father, he said, "Yeah, she's really something, and what a beauty, that one. If I weren't happily married and, ya know, her *father*…"

He'd made essentially the same crack nine years ago on a talk show while promoting Season Three of *The Apprentice* – but now he's running for president, not an Emmy. "Does the guy have the wisdom to grow his base, what Kennedy called 'greatness and fitness?'" says Schmidt, the GOP strategist. "Can his range and tone expand to meet that criteria?" Maybe what Trump needs is another Dobias, someone to tell him enough is enough and to get back on his game already. But if he had a *consigliere,* how likely is it that he would even listen? He's gotten this far largely taking only his own instruction, acting on his gut and nose for blood. Attack, attack, attack, said his old man at the wheel, driving around Brooklyn on summer Sundays to spring surprise inspections on lazy supers. Trump paid attention and learned another lesson beside it: Take plenty of muscle with you when you go.

Meantime, you can say this for the man: He keeps a campaign promise, at least through dessert. After dinner on the plane, Trump gets up to stretch his legs, wandering to the galley for something sweet. He rummages through the cupboard, where his beloved Oreos live. Trump grabs the pack of cookies, eyes them fondly a moment, then replaces them on the shelf, uneaten. Returning to his seat with a couple of Vienna Fingers (made by Keebler, not treasonous Nabisco), he catches me looking at them and grunts. "I meant what I said: No more Oreos for Trump! And you can quote me on that if you want."

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Francis' American Crusade

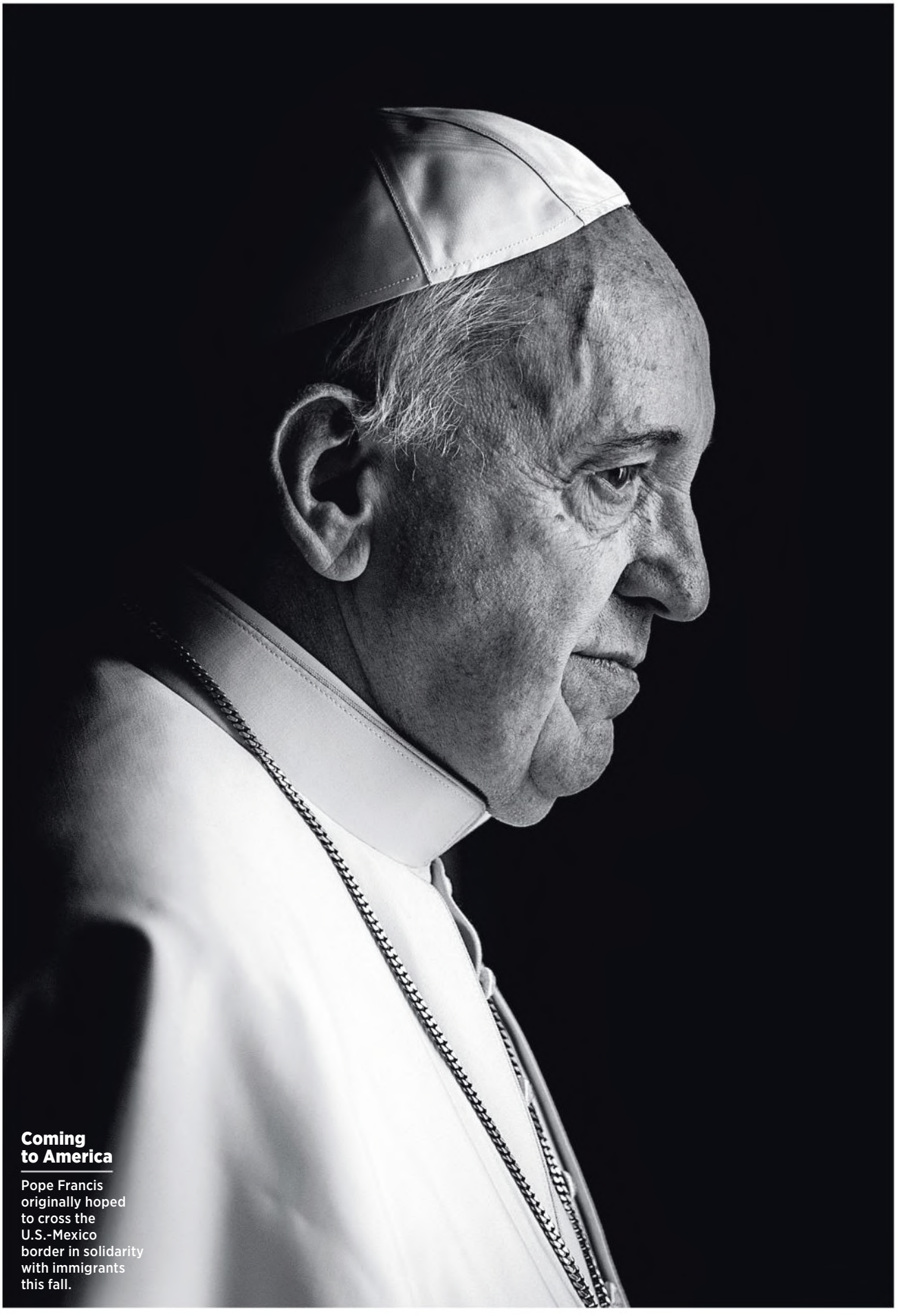
The pope is taking on climate change and poverty – but his toughest fight may be with the alliance of conservative clerics and right-wing politicians

BY MARK BINELLI

When Pope Francis arrives in Washington, D.C., on September 22nd, it will not only be his first papal visit to the United States; it will be his first visit ever. He's 78 years old, but he spent most of his life in his native Argentina, as a Jesuit priest and later cardinal. Aside from required trips to Rome for official church business – he always insisted on flying economy – the former Jorge Bergoglio rarely left Buenos Aires. His one substantial vacation for pleasure, a trip to the Holy Land in 1973, was not well-timed: He arrived just as the Yom Kippur War was breaking out and so spent most of his visit confined to his Jerusalem hotel room.

In Washington, Francis will meet with President Obama at the White House. He will also travel to New York – where he will speak at the United Nations General Assembly, celebrate a mass at Madison Square Garden and visit the 9/11 Memorial – and Philadelphia, where he will visit Independence Mall and inmates at a local prison and appear at a global Catholic conference called the World Meeting of Families. And he will become the first pope to address a joint session of Congress, thanks to an invitation from House Speaker John Boehner, a devout Catholic. *The New York Times* described the papal visit as a "long-held dream" of the speaker, who has been sending feelers to Rome for the past two decades. Francis is "not afraid to take on the status quo or . . . say what he really thinks," Boehner told the *Times*. "So I'm sure the pope will have things to say that people will find interesting, and I'm looking forward to his visit."

Boehner's enthusiasm might have slightly dampened had the pope been able to enter the U.S. the way he'd originally hoped – via Mexico, crossing the border as a show of solidarity with immigrants. The idea was ultimately nixed because of logistical and scheduling difficulties. But the fact that it was floated at all is yet another illustration of Pope Francis' brilliant understanding of his own power as a disrupter. During the two and a half years of his papacy, the unscripted, often radical words and actions of the pope have thrilled believers and nonbelievers alike, on a scale no contemporary religious leader other than the Dalai Lama has approached. "People who've thought of the church as the incarnation of evil at worst or the Easter Bunny with real estate at best have been telling me, 'I love your pope!'" says Michael Sean Winters, a columnist at the *National Catholic Reporter*. And yet many conservative American Catholics – in particular, politicians – have found themselves unmoored by Pope Francis' profound tonal shift.



Coming to America

Pope Francis originally hoped to cross the U.S.-Mexico border in solidarity with immigrants this fall.

CONTRASTO/REDUX

For generations, the religious right has been allowed to define the terms of the debate when it comes to the intersection of faith and American politics, placing an emphasis on culture-war issues such as abortion and same-sex marriage that tended to work against progressives. So it's been awkward, to say the least, for Republican Catholic officeholders to be faced with a pope who, six months into his papacy, told an interviewer that the church should not be "obsessed" with "issues related to abortion, gay marriage and the use of contraceptive methods." He wasn't changing doctrine, but the top-down shift in emphasis was striking – "The teaching of the church, for that matter, is clear, and I am a son of the church, but it is not necessary to talk about these issues all the time," Francis said – and with his actions, he went even further. In January, for instance, he reportedly met with, and hugged, Diego Neria Lejarraga, a transgender Catholic man from Plasencia, Spain, after Lejarraga wrote Francis a letter. Though a local priest had called Lejarraga "the devil's daughter," at the meeting, Francis told him, "You are a son of God, and the church loves you and accepts you as you are."

In April, two years earlier than expected, Francis unceremoniously ended an investigation of U.S. nuns that started under his predecessor, Pope Benedict. The nuns had been accused of trafficking in "radical feminist themes" and of straying from Catholic teaching by not focusing enough of their attention on issues like abortion, but Francis personally summoned four members of the group under investigation to the Vatican and expressed his appreciation for their work in a nearly hourlong meeting. "The conservative effort to control the church during prior papacies was very effective," notes Sister Simone Campbell, the executive director of the progressive Catholic lobbying group Network and a speaker at the 2012 Democratic convention. "They created a fear factor among the moderate leadership about being reported to Rome. What Pope Francis has done is freed them from fear."

The pope's unscripted and radical actions have thrilled on a scale only the Dalai Lama has approached.

For his part, the pope has maintained a relentless focus on his own obsessions – the poor and the dispossessed of the world, and how their lives are ravaged by unbridled capitalism, a grotesque and insatiable consumer culture, climate change, globalization – in powerful, plain-spoken language that is the opposite of anodyne and that at times places him, rhetorically at least, far to the left not only of the Republican Party but of most Democrats, certainly President Obama and Hillary Clinton.

On a trip to Bolivia in July, Francis, quoting a fourth-century bishop, referred to the "unfettered pursuit of money" as "the dung of the devil," and blasted a "new colonialism" that "appears as the anonymous influence of mammon: corporations, loan agencies, certain 'free trade' treaties and the imposition of measures of 'austerity' which always tighten the belt of workers and the poor." He also prayed at the site where a Marxist priest had been murdered by a right-wing Bolivian death squad in 1980 and accepted a crucifix from Bolivian president Evo Morales carved in the shape of a Communist hammer-and-sickle. When pressed about the gift by reporters, he shrugged. "For me, it was not an offense," he said, adding that he'd be taking it back to the Vatican.

Perhaps even more disorienting to the right wing, Francis also directly addressed man-made global warming in an astounding 180-page encyclical titled "Laudato Si'," or "Praise Be to You" – largely a broadside against the myopic, profit-driven environmental policies threatening our planet. The topic was not a new one for Francis: As archbishop of Buenos Aires, he'd been a key author of a 2007 document released by Latin American and Caribbean bishops that made "ecological destruction" a major focus, denouncing the "irrational exploitation" of natural resources. In "Laudato Si'," with the help of a scientific adviser, Francis methodically describes a crisis of "global environmental deterioration," and sets the blame squarely upon human greed and shortsightedness, "compulsive consumerism" and "a throwaway culture, which affects the excluded just as it quickly reduces things to rubbish." Employing language both blunt ("The Earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth") and prophetic ("Nothing in this world is indifferent to us"), Francis earned praise from climate scientists at NASA and the National Center for Atmospheric Research, as well as Naomi Klein, Neil deGrasse Tyson and Al Gore (with the latter noting, "I could become a Catholic because of this pope").

It's been more fun watching the response of the Republican presidential nominees, six of whom happen to be Catholic and most of them far more comfortable talking about defunding Planned Parenthood or ginning up bogus "religious liberty" issues – the Supreme Court is going to force you to bake a gay wedding cake! – than addressing global warming. Rick Santorum, who has called climate change a hoax, advised the pope to leave "science to the scientists," while Jeb Bush – who, as governor of Florida, ordered the reinsertion of a feeding tube of a woman in a persistent vegetative state, in explicit defiance of both her husband and the courts – told Sean Hannity, "I don't get economic policy from my bishops or my cardinals or my pope.... I think religion ought to be about making us better as people and less about things that end up getting in the political realm." Chris Christie, in a similar vein, attempted to demonstrate his independence from Rome with an ill-advised anecdote, sharing with voters at a New Hampshire restaurant that he has used birth control, "and not just the rhythm method!"

(Donald Trump, who is not Catholic, has yet to tweet about what a loser the pope is, but Winters thinks the pair make irresistible counterpoints: Francis' rejection of many of the trappings of his office has "just blown up" the imperial atmosphere of the Vatican – "You don't have a court if you don't live in the palace, and it's hard to maintain a courtly atmosphere if you're waiting in line at the cafeteria" – while Trump "would have made a great 16th-century pontiff. When you go to Rome and see all of those baroque churches, what is written over their edifices? The names of the popes who built them. Those were the Trumps of their era!")

It's a far cry from the recent past, when conservative U.S. bishops have effectively worked as unofficial dirty-tricks operatives for the GOP, denying Communion or issuing warnings to pro-choice Catholics like John Kerry, Joe Biden and Nancy Pelosi. Rep. Charles Rangel, the Harlem Democrat, is Catholic, and says he has had invitations to speak at Catholic high school graduations rescinded by local religious leaders, apparently because of his pro-choice views. "It never really bothered me, because it appeared to be so petty," Rangel tells me. Needless to say, he's "very, very excited" about Francis' address to Congress. "People can distort the Bible any way they want to, but when

Contributing editor Mark Binelli *wrote about Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign in July.*





Pope of the People

Above: Washing feet at a center for disabled people in Rome, 2014. Right: Visiting homeless and impoverished children at a shelter in Manila in January.

you have science and religion on the same side of a question, there's no place for fundamentalists to go. You speak against the pope at your own risk."

There have yet to be any reported incidents of lefty bishops withholding the Eucharist from prominent climate-change deniers. But there's no doubt the Catholic right is struggling with life on the wrong side of Vatican activism. As Austin Ruse, the president of the conservative Catholic group the Center for Family and Human Rights Institute, or C-Fam, which lobbies the United Nations on issues like abortion, contraception and gay rights, tells me, "I now know how politically liberal Catholics felt all those years during John Paul II and Benedict, waking up in the morning and wondering what statement of the pope they're going to have to deal with. I think a lot of orthodox Catholics really tried, in the beginning, to rush out and explain what Francis was saying, to put his statements in context. And now they've given up."

THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. MATTHEW THE APOSTLE, the seat of the archdiocese of Washington, D.C., is a 10-minute walk from the White House. Before he became an apostle, St. Matthew worked as a tax collector. Now he's the patron saint of public servants, granting him a special place in the hearts of Catholics in this particular one-industry town and making the cathedral that bears his name a peculiar nexus of religion and politics. President John F. Kennedy's funeral was held here, and each fall, on the Sunday before the start of the new Supreme Court term, the church celebrates a special mass in which blessings are bestowed upon the justices, a number of whom attend the service (along with other political luminaries, such as John Boehner).

Though the church was built in 1895, there's something homely and unassuming about its red-brick exterior, especially when compared with grand cathedrals like St. Patrick's in New York. The interior, on the other hand, possesses the sort of baroque majesty one would hope for, including a soaring 190-foot dome. One Monday in August, about 30 people gathered in the pews for a late-afternoon Mass. A woman in glasses read from the Old Testament (the story of Moses in the desert and the manna from heaven) and then the New Testament (the story of Jesus' miracle of the loaves and the fishes), setting the table for what seemed to be an obvious theme. But the priest, in his homily, pivoted from the notion of feeding the hungry to the question of belief. After all of these miracles, he asked the near-empty cathedral, what more do we need from God to make us believe? He repeated the question and let it hang in the air for a moment, unanswered. Then he returned to his seat.

Congress isn't the only tough crowd Pope Francis will be facing in Washington. At the Cathedral of St. Matthew, he will address a gathering of U.S. bishops – most of them appointees of Francis' far more conservative predecessors, Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. "The Vatican is very aware of American political resistance to the pope," says Winters of the *National Catholic Reporter*, "but they're aware of the internal church politics in America even more. What is unique with this pope is the number of U.S. bishops who don't like him." According to Michael Lee, a professor of theology at Fordham University, "loyalty and obedience" were buzzwords when it came to appointing bishops in the past. "And how different is that from Francis' messy field-hospital church? You're really talking about an entire generation of leadership, and some of them suddenly feel like dissidents."

Funnily enough, the pejorative "cafeteria Catholic" is generally only applied to American Catholics who feel free to ignore teachings about sexual morality – prohibitions on, say, birth control or premarital sex. But the term is rarely thrown at Catholics who are pious when it comes to bedroom issues but take a pass on the church's clear social-justice message. "The oppressed workers, above all, ought to be liberated from the savagery of greedy men, who inordinately use human beings as things for gain," Pope Leo XIII wrote in his encyclical "Rerum Novarum" ("On the Condition of Workers") all the way back in 1891. "The core of the Gospels, as Francis reminds us, is mercy, kindness, caring for the poor, 'judge not lest ye be judged,'" Winters says. "There's nothing explicit about gays in the Gospels, but this stuff is very explicit!"

In the U.S., though, Irish Catholics dominated, importing with them an obsession with sin and sexual morality; more recently, the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980, two years after John Paul II became pope, opened the door for a new generation of conservative Catholic intellectuals like George Weigel and Michael Novak, who promoted a synergy between Catholicism and the free market. John Paul II had come out of Soviet-era Poland and was a fierce opponent of both Communism and

FROM TOP: ALBERTO PIZZOLI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES; L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO/AP IMAGES

the radical Catholic liberation theology sweeping Latin America, and he and Reagan made for natural allies. When they met for the first time, in the Vatican Library in 1982, they bonded over having "survived assassination attempts only six weeks apart in 1981," Carl Bernstein wrote in *Time*. "Both believed God had saved them for a special mission."

"The opposition to liberation theology from the Vatican played nicely to the political objectives of the Republican Party," says Lee. "If people could think of Ronald Reagan and John Paul II as tearing down the Berlin Wall together, that was advantageous, especially when it came to luring Catholics, who had traditionally been Democratic voters, to the GOP. And the theological fine points of the pope's objectives were lost amidst the geopolitical ramifications."

Indeed, certain conservatives spun John Paul II's hatred of Marxist totalitarianism into a full-throated embrace of capitalism, downplaying his condemnation of its excesses. ("The Catholic Church has always refused and continues today to refuse to make the market the supreme regulator…of social life," John Paul II said in 1991. "Something exists that is owed to man just because he is man." Two years later, he noted that the church has always "distanced itself from capitalistic ideology, holding it responsible for grave social injustices.")

Self-styled papal translators like Weigel and Novak selected passages from often-dense speeches and encyclicals to support their theses. The same thing happened under Pope Benedict: When he called for a redistribution of wealth in a 2009 encyclical, Weigel wrote a column for *National Review* in which he proposed crossing out such "incomprehensible" passages with a red marker, arguing that they must have been inserted by liberal aides.

Meanwhile, Francis, by speaking so clearly on the subject – often putting aside his prepared text, so his words could not be blamed on staffers – is "not spinnable," Winters says. "You just can't do that with this guy. You do hear attempts to manipulate and trim what he's saying, with what I can only characterize as somewhat racist overtones: 'Oh, the poor, benighted Argentine doesn't understand how wonderful us Americans are.' Well, he knows the consequences firsthand of U.S. courts deciding Argentina has to pay back vulture hedge funds. He's acutely aware of that. And he understands that capitalism succeeded where Marxism failed when it comes to pushing God to the sideline. Instead of erecting one giant God in the form of the party, we do it with a million little Gods in the aisles of the department store."

C-Fam's Ruse thinks certain right-wing critics of the pope, like Rush Limbaugh, have mischaracterized Francis' message. (Limbaugh has said, "A man of religion, the Vicar of Christ, seems to have fallen in with the Communist way of doing things.… You've gotta keep on giving until you're no longer rich!") And yet, Ruse complains, "The pope's using the phrase 'unfettered capitalism' – that's the strawiest of straw men. I don't know where that kind of capitalism exists. There is crony capitalism, which is big business teaming up with big government, and which I vehemently oppose. If he used phrases like that, it would make people happy. But saying capitalism is filth makes it hard for people to join him in his fight. Because the language of his premise is false."







Playing Politics

(1) Discussing economic inequality with President Obama in 2014. **(2)** Meeting with nuns after ending the church's investigation of their "radical feminist themes." **(3)** Many U.S. bishops appointed by Francis' predecessors are far more conservative.

FROM TOP: PABLO MARTINEZ MONSIVAIS/AP IMAGES; L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO/AP IMAGES; L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO/ANSA/ZUMAPRESS.COM

Deeply alarmed by the power of Francis' message, an entire network of right-wing Catholic organizations has been increasingly willing to push back against the Vatican. Tim Busch, the chairman of the California-based Napa Institute – which holds an annual summer conference that draws Catholic business leaders – recently announced plans to help fund a $3 million research and education program at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., "focused on the compatibility of capitalism and Catholicism." (Other funders include the Charles Koch Foundation.)

Then there's the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty, which is run by a Catholic priest named Robert Sirico – he's the brother of actor Tony Sirico, best known for his portrayal of Paulie Walnuts on *The Sopranos* – and hosts forums with titles like "Government: Less Is More." Sirico recently wrote an op-ed for *The Wall Street Journal* attacking "Laudato Si'" for its "decid-

ed bias against the free market and suggestions that poverty is the result of a globalized economy," though he failed to disclose the hundreds of thousands of dollars in donations Acton has received from extraction-industry giants such as Exxon Mobil and the Koch family.

The near-impossibility of combating such well-funded disinformation campaigns is a depressing reality for progressives. What has the right so jumpy about Francis is the size of his bully pulpit, which even unlimited spending might not be able to counter. Consider, for instance, the 24/7 global media coverage Francis' U.S. trip will receive. When else would an economic message as critical of capitalism as Francis' be granted such a stage?

Now it's important, here, to remind ourselves once again that Francis, for all of the liberalism of his economic and environmental messages, still heads up an organization with a number of medieval positions regarding women and sexuality. Francis has affirmed the church's opposition to same-sex marriage and female priests, and in his climate encyclical, he links abortion with the throwaway consumerist culture he decries. "I like to say he's an equal-opportunity annoyer – he really is holding up the whole message," acknowledges Sister Campbell. Agrees Winters, "Both political parties are well-advised to start every statement with the words 'I think the pope is challenging all of us. . . .' He ain't a Democrat."

Pope Francis speaks out so clearly against capitalism, Winters says, that his words are "not spinnable."

"Most of us try so hard to place him in an American framework, that left-right binary, and it just doesn't work," says Rod Dreher, a senior editor at *The American Conservative* who writes frequently about religion. Dreher is no longer Catholic – he joined the Eastern Orthodox Church in the wake of the pedophilia scandals – but one summer before he converted, he recalled leaving the offices of *National Review,* where he worked at the time, and mentioning to an editor that he needed to pick up his CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) delivery. "She said, 'Oh, that's so lefty!'" recounts Dreher. "I thought, 'That's weird. What's so lefty about buying food from local farmers?' It made me realize that if you're going to be a faithful Catholic, it's going to put you at odds with both conventional American liberalism and conservatism."

All that said, Francis has signaled he's open to discussing more serious doctrinal changes. In October, a synod – an official ecclesiastical meeting called to discuss doctrine – convened by Francis will gather bishops from around the world for a debate on issues relating to the family; a draft from an initial meeting last fall included a section titled "Welcoming Homosexual Persons," noting that "homosexuals have gifts and qualities to offer the Christian community," and also recommended greater tolerance for divorce and cohabitation outside of marriage. Those paragraphs were not approved by the full synod and were struck from the text. But Lee calls the debate "unbelievable. *Most* unbelievable, perhaps, was the fact that the public was allowed to see the disagreement. That would have never happened under John Paul II or Benedict."

This month, Francis further startled conservatives by announcing that, during the church's upcoming Holy Year of Mercy – a special yearlong jubilee focusing on themes of forgiveness – priests could absolve women who'd had abortions, noting that he was "well aware of the pressure that has led them to this decision." Lee points out that Francis has spoken critically of his own "authoritarian" tendencies when he served as a Jesuit provincial superior as a young man in Buenos Aires. "His humility, and his idea of what leadership should look like, all run against that authoritarianism," Lee says. "It's a lesson he must have learned in Argentina, and in part I think he's speaking to that 36-year-old version of himself when he's allowing these open debates to take place. He hasn't changed doctrine, yes. But the church has been around for 2,000 years! That change happens at a certain pace. And change can't happen without discussion."

One of the bishops attending the synod, Archbishop Charles Chaput of Philadelphia, will also be hosting Francis on his U.S. visit. Chaput comes from a far more conservative wing of the church than Francis. In June, when a local Catholic school fired its director of religious education over her same-sex marriage, Chaput released a statement saying, "There's nothing complicated or controversial in this. It's a simple matter of honesty."

The director, Margie Winters, had worked at the school for eight years. She's been married to her partner since 2007; they met when both were training to become nuns. "It turned out we weren't called to religious life, but to life together," Winters tells me. She says the school administration and her colleagues knew about her wife, but when a parent learned of her marriage and complained to the diocese, the school felt it had to fire her – a move that seemed to outrage the majority of school parents, nearly 200 of whom attended a meeting in support of Winters the week after her firing.

"I have a master's degree in divinity," Winters says. "Within church teaching, there is a right of conscience, and that's how I approach this: I know the God that I believe in loves me and has created me, and the love I have is a good love and a just love, period. I can't see it any other way." Winters hopes to meet Pope Francis in Philadelphia and ask him to put a moratorium on future firings of gay and lesbian teachers and to work toward LGBT inclusion in the church.

"All politicians are going to try to get some of the Francis shine on them," Dreher of *The American Conservative* says. "The thing I'm more interested in is the effect Francis will have on the American laity. I like to think American Catholics and Christians will be willing to listen to what this pope has to say and be challenged by it. But I don't know if we're that kind of country anymore. I don't think liberals or conservatives are ready to make any big changes based on what he says. Partly that's due to cynicism coming after the abuse scandals. But more than that, Americans are so individualistic, and he's got a very difficult job to break through that. Whether it's individual sexual morality or the free-market economy, we want what we want and will figure out how to get it, and how to rationalize it."

Sister Campbell remains more optimistic. She's been noticing how the pope has been speaking to themes of political gridlock. This reminds her of a favorite passage from "Laudato Si'," which she pauses to read: "Our goal is not to amass information or to satisfy curiosity, but rather to become painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it."

"This is a huge challenge, this idea of opening ourselves to the pain of our world," Campbell says. "But that's really what it's all about. And it is the antithesis of our politics. The most radical political action Pope Francis is calling for is that we let our hearts be broken open. Then you can no longer be content with business as usual."



Ryan Murphy's latest schlockfest, *Scream Queens*

Season of the Scream

Slasher spoofs, the 'Evil Dead' reborn, Don Johnson's return to prime time, and a double dose of Rob Lowe. By Rob Sheffield

Scream Queens

TUES., 8 P.M., FOX

Let's call it right now: *Scream Queens* is already looking like the smartest move Ryan Murphy's ever made – it has all the best elements of *Glee* and *American Horror Story,* but it tops them both. The sorority sisters of Kappa Kappa Tau have a big problem: a mysterious killer in a red devil costume, who's only slightly more evil than the sorority sisters themselves. *Scream Queens* turns this setting into an anthology series – a murder or three per week – that goes for laughs, like a demented mix of *Scream* and *Gossip Girl*. Emma Roberts is the most horrible Kappa of them all, queen bee Chanel Oberlin, sneering lines like, "That girl was a bitch who thought she was all that because her family founded the Olive Garden and she had no gag reflex!" But there's scarcely a single non-horrible character here, which is exactly what you want when everybody's fair game to get killed next.

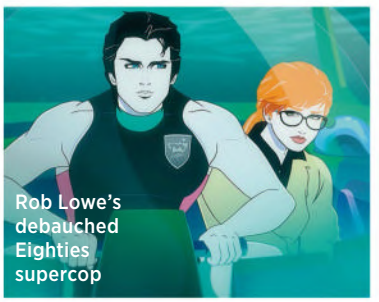
Scream Queens is loaded with evil pranks (somebody spiked the spray-tan tank with hydrochloric acid!) and sick jokes (a pledge reacts to the prospect of her imminent destruction by hysterically singing "Shake It Off") and nasty banter: "We're having a sideboob mixer and a white party, where everyone is encouraged to wear-slash-be white." It's also full of hilarious casting coups: Ariana Grande, Nick Jonas, Tavi Gevinson, Lea Michele in a neck brace. And as the hardass college dean who wants to take this sorority down, none other than the OG scream queen herself, Jamie Lee Curtis.

STEVE DIETL/FOX

Moonbeam City

WED., 8:30 P.M., COMEDY CENTRAL

Dazzle Novak is the ultimate Eighties supercop in this fantastic animated romp, set in a neon-and-pastel Hair Decade where everything looks like a Duran Duran album cover. It's *Miami Vice* times *Archer* with a side of *Scarface*. And the chain-saw-toting low-life antihero with the wooden hand and the badass one-liners ("I got news for you, pal. You ain't leading but two things right now: Jack and shit. And Jack left town!"). Ash has spent the past 30 years trying to hide from the Dead-ite demons, getting wasted in his trailer to Deep Purple, while working as a stockboy. Once again, those occult words from the Book of the Dead get read aloud and wake up something dark in the woods. And once again, the only hope to save the human race from the undead is Ash. From his new sidekicks (welcome, Lucy Lawless!) to the gory fight scenes ("My heart's jackhammering like a quarterback on prom night!"), *Ash vs Evil Dead* proves that we need Ash now more than ever. As the man himself would say: Groovy!



Rob Lowe's debauched Eighties supercop

the voice of Dazzle: Rob Lowe, proving that last year's McConaugh-ssaince has nothing on this year's Lowe-splosion. When he isn't busting perps at a shopping-mall arcade or making yayo-fueled love to exotic wind-chime artists, Dazzle torments his foxy supervisor Pizazz, a.k.a. Elizabeth Banks, who threatens to bust him so fast it'll make his head spin. Dazzle's riposte: "My head doesn't know the meaning of the word spin."

Ash vs Evil Dead

SAT., 9 P.M., STARZ

Damn right, the evil dead: It's like they never left. More than two decades after his classic *Evil Dead* flicks, Sam Raimi brings the franchise to TV, and despite sky-high fan expectations, he does the legacy proud. Bruce Campbell makes his long-overdue return as Ash,



Campbell gets groovy all over again in *Evil Dead*.

The Player

THURS., 9 P.M., NBC

Free at last: Wesley Snipes, back on top of the game. In his long-awaited comeback thriller, Snipes isn't just any old Las Vegas casino pit boss – he presides over a secret high-stakes game where the super-rich bet on crime. And he recruits Alex Kane (Philip Winchester, the pinup cop from *Strike Back*) to be the player who has to stop these crimes from happening. From the producers of *The Blacklist, The Player* has the same witty mock-formal vibe – giving Snipes the full Spader treatment. He's all debonair evil, constantly adjusting his tie and smiling at how cunningly he's screwed over everybody else.



The girl with too many tattoos

Blindspot

MON., 10 P.M., NBC

A duffel bag has just been found abandoned in Times Square. Inside: a naked woman whose memory has been erased, but who is inked head to toe in mysterious tattoo runes, including the name of a top FBI agent, who swiftly decides that national security depends on the two of them teaming up to crack the tattoo code. *Thor*'s Jaimie Alexander is likably vulnerable and earnest as Jane Doe, straining to figure out her past despite her amnesia. Yet the FBI agents are a dull bunch by comparison, especially main man Sullivan Stapleton. *Blindspot* can only improve when the ink-happy supervillains show up.

Blood & Oil

SUN., 9 P.M., ABC

Don Johnson never fades away – and who would ever want him to? He's a North Dakota oil tycoon in this clever old-school soap – a salty wildcatter who still walks and talks like a cowboy, especially when he's kicking the ass of his spoiled brat of a son. Enter Chace Crawford (*Gossip Girl*) as the up-and-coming outsider who wants to overtake Johnson's empire. Despite its Eighties heart, the show is fast-paced and smart in its frontier mud-and-boots boomtown vibe – a lot like *Blue Bloods,* except with Sonny Crockett instead of Magnum. Secret weapon: Amber Valletta, the *House of Style* model who was underused on *Revenge,* chewing up the scenery as Johnson's backstabbing supervixen of a wife.

The Grinder

TUES., 8:30 P.M., FOX

Sometimes even Rob Lowe must face an existential crisis. In *The Grinder,* he plays the egomaniac pretty-boy star of a hit TV procedural about a slick lawyer, barking his catchphrases: "The Grinder never settles!" (As Lowe explains, "Season Four, Episode Nine, 'Settle to the Metal.'") But after his show gets axed, he drifts back to his family in Idaho, sighing, [*Cont. on 58*]

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: VIRGINIA SHERWOOD/NBC; FRANK MATT KLITSCHER; COMEDY CENTRAL

Ridley Scott's New Opus

Producer returns to his science-fiction roots with 'The Man in the High Castle'

After 30 years, Ridley Scott is returning to his *Blade Runner* roots – by revisiting cult novelist Philip K. Dick for the new Amazon series *The Man in the High Castle*. Based on Dick's 1962 sci-fi novel, the 10-episode show imagines an alternate history in which the Nazis win World War II and rule the U.S. (The East Coast is now known as the Greater Nazi Reich; the West Coast is the Japanese Pacific States; and the American flag has a white swastika against its blue background.) The show unfolds as a riveting alternate-universe thriller. Underground resistance fighters plot to bring down the regime as the fascist government engages in political power plays, while a contraband film sought by both sides suggests that some mysterious behind-the-scenes character is pulling the strings. After struggling for years to adapt the series for the BBC, Scott teamed with veteran *X-Files* showrunner Frank Spotnitz to finally bring the book to life (all episodes debut November 20th). "In TV, 99 percent of the time, good triumphs over evil," Spotnitz says. "But in this world, you're reminded that history doesn't always work out the way it should – it's mind-bending stuff."



Achtung, baby! What if the Nazis won World War II?

For Scott and Spotnitz, the hope is that, in expanding on and exploring *The Man in the High Castle*'s parallel universe, they'll force audiences to question their own values and moral parameters – a sort of what-if parlor game. So far, audiences have been playing along; the show's trial-run episode became Amazon's most-watched pilot to date when it debuted this past January. "What's most unnerving about the show is that you see how this world works and you think, 'Well, it's not *that* bad,'" Spotnitz says, chuckling. "Then you see a shot of Times Square filled with Nazi signage and you go, 'Oh, right!' When I first saw that American flag with a swastika on it, the image pushed a primal button in me. History and national identity are very personal things – to see those symbols defaced is incredibly unsettling." DAVID FEAR

TV PREVIEW

[*Cont. from 57*] "Right now, I'm just driving on the highway of What the Hell Is My Life, looking for an offramp." He finds it by invading the small-town law practice of his awkward little bro Fred Savage, and turning his mastery of TV-courtroom clichés ("I'll allow it" jokes galore!) into the pursuit of justice. Lowe has a blast as the same smarmy asshole he's played so brilliantly from *Wayne's World* to *Parks and Rec*. And watching Lowe torment Savage is the kind of stunt casting that pays off.

Minority Report

MON., 9 P.M., FOX

Welcome to the future, circa 2065: Teenagers have selfie drones, karaoke is still happening and genetic engineering has turned french fries into health food. And the precognitives who used to see crimes before they happen – they've been erased from the public record. But that doesn't stop them from seeing things. *Minority Report* picks up where the movie left off – 10 years later, the PreCrime Unit has been abolished. Three sibling precogs have been hidden away from the rest of society, but while the sister disapproves, one brother can't resist sneaking back in, lurking around Washington, D.C., with a notebook of drawings of the murders he sees in the future. He finds a policewoman, Meagan Good, and together they form an unlikely crime-fighting team. Tom Cruise doesn't show up – but Wilmer Valderrama surprisingly fits right in as one of the cops. Welcome back to prime time, Fez.

Crazy Ex-Girlfriend

MON., 8 P.M., THE CW

Give this one full points for audacity, as Rachel Bloom tries to revive the musical sitcom, boldly going where *Glee* and *Smash* and even *Viva Laughlin* didn't dare. Bloom's Rebecca is a New York City lawyer with a booming career but a not-too-steady grip on reality – she makes the show's title seem like an understatement. Still carrying a torch for the random boy who dumped her at summer camp years ago, she finally goes off the deep end, quits her job and moves across the country to stalk him. Next thing she knows, Rebecca's wandering the strip malls of a nowhere town called West Covina, California, just two hours from the beach ("four in traffic!"). And of course, she sings show tunes about her new life: "In my soul I feel a fire/'Cause I'm heading for the pride of the Inland Empire." The musical numbers are witty ("People eat at Chez Applebee/And the sky seems to smile at me"), but it's Bloom who deserves the credit for making it all work – her psycho songbird seems charming, rather than just code-red frightening.



Bloom as the psycho ex-girlfriend

FROM TOP: LIANE HENTSCHER; EDDY CHEN/THE CW



Batiste brings his second-line style to late night.

Jon Batiste on 'The Late Show'

The New Orleans musician is teaming with Stephen Colbert to create a TV dance party

It's a warm evening in june, and Jon Batiste is bringing a little bit of New Orleans to New York. The 28-year-old musician-composer and his band, Stay Human, are playing the final night of a residency at New York's posh NoMad Hotel. Suddenly, Batiste hoists his melodica and leads the musicians (and the audience) out onto the streets – parading down Broadway second-line style past surprised bystanders and into a restaurant, where the horn section ends up jamming on the scaffolding above the entrance. "If a moment leads you to do something," Batiste says with a smile, "don't fight the feeling."



Colbert

In September, Batiste will try out that philosophy on national TV as musical director and bandleader on *The Late Show With Stephen Colbert*. "His music makes the audience feel so good, we may have to install a 'Do Not Make Love' sign," Colbert joked when he announced the hire. Colbert and Batiste met last year when Batiste and Stay Human played *The Colbert Report*. They got together again this spring for a meeting in Colbert's office in which the comedian impressed Batiste with his vision of comedy. "He's all about people having a voice," says Batiste. "That fit the whole concept of what we do. We're there to light a fire on set."

Batiste calls his joyful sound "social music." The product of a New Orleans jazz family that goes back generations, he studied at Juilliard and formed Stay Human with classmates. They soon began performing guerrilla shows dubbed "love riots." "In Istanbul, we had 500 people in the street," he says. "They were singing, 'I feel good, I feel free, I feel fine just being me,' and they weren't English speakers."

On *Colbert*, Batiste hopes to tear down the walls between the audience, the band and the host, and he even had a hand in designing the show's stage set in order to make that happen. "Social music is about breaking down borders and bringing people together," he says, "and it's going to be exciting to get to do it every night." CHRISTOPHER R. WEINGARTEN

Recipe for 'Supergirl' Success

CBS's *Supergirl,* debuting October 26th, is the first female superhero show of the 21st century – so showrunner Greg Berlanti (*The Flash*) has to make it fly. "I hear it more and more," says Berlanti, "how desperate and excited people are to have a female hero." Here are his five secrets for helping *Supergirl* take off:

Stay gender-neutral. "It's an action show that happens to have a female lead. We paid no attention to gender in terms of proportion of action to drama to romance."

Push limits with special effects. *Supergirl* has CGI effects that would've been unimaginable on TV a decade ago. "On the board in the writers' room, it says, 'Heart, humor, spectacle.' We try and treat these shows like movies."

Cast the right person. *Glee*'s Melissa Benoist is an unexpectedly amusing presence as Supergirl – think Annie Hall in a cape. "When I saw her audition, I just found myself giggling uncontrollably. You always believe what she's doing. The original Donner *Superman* film was a touchstone – you could have a charming hero without meaning the show felt soft."

Don't be afraid to borrow. In her civilian identity, Kara Danvers, Supergirl works for a media magnate who bears a distinct resemblance to Meryl Streep in *The Devil Wears Prada.* "Homages help ground these worlds because people are familiar with the elements."

Keep Superman offscreen. "Thank God for a show like *Veep.* You start like, 'Where's the president?' And then finally realize you're more interested in her story." BRIAN HIATT



Benoist goes up, up and away.

FROM TOP: ERIN PATRICE O'BRIEN; JEFFREY STAAB/CBS; MATTHIAS CLAMER/WARNER BROS. ENTERTAINMENT INC.

Terrence Howard's Dangerous Mind

He's the leading man on network TV's biggest new show, but trouble and turmoil have chased him his entire life. The 'Empire' star opens up

By Erik Hedegaard

TERRENCE HOWARD IS STANDING IN FRONT of a mirror inside his extra-deluxe, penthouse-level Chicago apartment, looking at himself looking back. You could say he sees himself as he is today, dressed in a silky long-sleeve loungewear top with a scarf circling his neck, like right out of the Hollywood handbook for dapper flamboyants. Or as what he has most recently become, a television-land megastar, for how convincingly he plays super-badass hip-hop-record mogul Lucious Lyon on Fox's *Empire*, this year's most unexpected hit show. Or even as certain others see him, including some ex-wives, as a man given to outbursts of stunning violence and domestic abuse, allegations of which are, in part, what led him to take the *Empire* role in the first place. "Since they see me as a bad guy," he says his thinking went, "I'm gonna play a bad guy." ¶ So, he's got any number of ways he can look at himself. And the mirror continues to reflect, as does Howard. ¶ "Today, for me, has been about searching out who I am," he says. "We've got all these different faces that want to come out – there's at least four just in this moment, with a possible expansion to 432 – but which one do you let out? Is it the person who's cool that you've mastered? Is it the excited little boy?" ¶ For the moment, he's leaning toward the youngster. In his head, he's now six years old, standing in front of a different mirror, in Cleveland, in the ghetto, just a little light-skinned black kid with his daddy, Tyrone, right next to him. His daddy who three years ago spent 11 months in prison for stabbing a man to death while waiting in line to see a department-store Santa. Everyone had children there. Little Terrence's coat was splattered with blood. But now his daddy was here and saying to him, "You see that curly motherfucker right there? That little redheaded motherfucker right there? You love him, because the only person that's gonna be there no matter what happens in your life is that little motherfucker."

Howard has never forgotten those words, and they've helped him through some pretty desperate moments. At one time, he was going to be a big movie star, having built his reputation on films like *Crash* (2005) and *Hustle & Flow* (2005) and his bank account with movies like *Iron Man* (2008), for which he was paid $3.5 million, more than any other mem-



HUSTLE AND FLOW
"I'm suffering. My checks are being garnished. There's nothing worse than a broke movie star."

ETHAN HILL/"THE NEW YORK TIMES"/REDUX

ber of the cast, including star Robert Downey Jr. But word started to leak out about Howard being difficult on set; as well, women began speaking up about his temper. He soon found himself reduced to $40,000 a movie. "When all that stuff went down about me, you're not in any bargaining position," he says. "You're shunned. You're persona non grata."

In response, the formerly redheaded little motherfucker did what he had to do. He continued to love himself by buying scissors, wire, magnets and vast numbers of sheets of plastic. He had a theory. It might seem crazy, it may even be crazy, but a long time ago he'd gotten hold of this notion that one times one doesn't equal one, but two. He began writing down his logic, in a language of his own devising that he calls Terryology. He wrote forward and backward, with both his right and left hands, sometimes using symbols he made up that look foreign, if not alien, to keep his ideas secret until they could be patented. In 2013, he got married again, to an L.A. restaurateur named Mira Pak, and the two would spend up to 17 hours a day cutting shapes out of the plastic and joining them together into various objects meant to demonstrate not only his one-times-one theory but many others as well.

Howard backs away from the mirror, returns to the living room. The place is filled with his fantastical plastic assemblages. They bear a similarity to building blocks but the shapes are infinitely more complex, in two dimensions and three, tied together by copper wire or held in place by magnets. There are hemispheres, cubes, tetrahedrons and flighty wings. Some of the objects are as small as mice, others as big as fire hydrants; some are hanging, some free-standing, a few larger ones lit from the inside with LED twinkle stars. They are gorgeous and otherworldly. He has no name for them. They just are. He loves them just as much as he loves himself and his infant son, Qirin, who is sleeping nearby and will one day inherit U.S. patent 20150079872 A1 ("Systems and methods for enhanced building-block applications"), among others.

He says he quit smoking cigarettes. Taking a seat not far from Qirin, he says, "Anything you do against yourself is an attack against the people you care about." (Later on, he will admit to "sneaking a cigarette here and there.")

Pak is here, too, tending to the child. Howard is looking at her now and saying, "When you meet your one, it's completely balanced. I don't have any greater authority than she does. It's the only thing that really works."

She smiles.

He smiles back. "You know, all my checks from Fox are being held for garnishment, because of my ex. I'm broke as can be. But my wife, she did well for herself, so she's covered us. This place, she's renting it. I'm suffering. There's nothing worse than being a broke movie star."

Pak says that they're soon going to be buying a house of their own. "In Winnetka," she says.

"The suburbs," Howard says, "as soon as they free up my money." He goes on, "It's always been a hard road for me. I run into bad luck. But I run into good luck too, so it's even-steven right now." He nods at Pak: "I've got a good wife."

And so it would seem. But you never know what you're going to get with a guy like Howard. Or which one of those 432 faces he has allowed to come out and talk. Or what's behind his smile. Or his words. Even a simple word like "wife," for instance. A few weeks later, it comes out that he and Pak had separated in mid-2014, with her filing for divorce earlier this year, citing "irreconcilable differences," and a month from now, their divorce will be final. Plus, in a court document signed in March, Pak stated that she hadn't lived with Howard since August 2014. And yet here they are, looking at each other somewhat fondly, and letting no one else be any the wiser.

It's in the light caught behind his emerald eyes, the graceful, manly bob and weave of his Adam's apple, and the sly, sure instinct of his lips. It's in the voice, sometimes so lazy and receding that it gets to the vanishing point and you have to lean forward. There's honey in it and maybe the sting of a bee. Melancholy. Sexy and scary. A flatterer, a con man, a robber, a womanizer. All of this, in varying degrees, from the moment he first got noticed in 1999's *The Best Man*, after having already spent nearly a decade breaking into Hollywood. Suddenly, studio execs were ringing him up to say, "You're gonna be the next Denzel!" And for the next few years it seemed possible, most especially because of how convincing he was as a weak-willed Hollywood producer in *Crash*, which won a Best Picture Oscar, and as a pimp in *Hustle & Flow*, which earned him an Oscar nomination. In brief, as an actor, he's a lulu – and not difficult at all, if you ask him.

"Well," he says, "I was difficult, but only because I would not conform. During *The Best Man*, they kept saying about this one line, 'This is a joke, so say it as a joke.' I was like, 'Y'all do what you want, but I'm not going to mutilate this moment.' And I said the line like I wanted, pausing before saying, 'Y'all know there ain't nothin' better than pussy, except some new pussy.' That seals my character, who he was. But after that, they spent the next year talking about how difficult I was. Then the movie comes out, I get all these accolades, and now the producers are like, 'Oh, you made the movie.' But now they've set it up that Terrence is difficult, and so that has followed me."

When show creator Lee Daniels first started casting *Empire*, he had Wesley Snipes in mind for Lucious. But that's before he talked to his pick to play Lucious' hot-tempered ex-con ex-wife, Cookie: Taraji P. Henson, who thought her costar in *Hustle & Flow* was just the ticket. "They came to me, and I said, 'The only person I'll do it with is Terrence,'" says Henson. "Cookie and Lucious sometimes hate and love each other in the same scene. There's an unspoken connection that you can't fake. My boy Terrence and I have that. So I said to Lee, 'If you can make it happen with Terrence, call me back.'" The end result is a modern-day hip-hop soap opera of Shakespearean dimensions, with nods to old-school psychodramas like *Dallas*, as kingpin Lucious Lyon struggles to keep his empire together and mink-loving Cookie tries to claw her way back into the business. "Everything I do with Lucious is still me," Howard says. "I just change the vibration. Because Lucious has a very base understanding of life – kill or be killed – I keep him down at a very low frequency." It's all about money, sex, power and, of course, family. It was one of network television's top-five scripted shows last season, starting off its 12-episode run with 10 million viewers and finishing up with 21 million. It's the biggest hit Fox has had in nearly a decade.

"I spent all my time as a kid trying to fit in. But as a result of the travesties I've gone through, I have become awakened."

As for Howard's success as Lucious, he's playing it cool. "I'm just trying to pay my bills," he says. "I'm looking forward to this show running its course. If I make a decent amount of money from it, I'll retire." He seems to be wanting a simpler life, the kind you find in Winnetka, one free of the temptations of Hollywood. "The problem with this business," he says, "you lose yourself."

Another problem Howard has is his temper. He's been escorted off a plane for unruly behavior. He's punched out strangers in a restaurant. He's said to have knocked at least two of his women around, most recently ex-wife Michelle Ghent, who after a 2013 trip to Costa Rica with Howard was photographed with a black eye. She said Howard did it. He either denies the allegations or shades the circumstances or has outright justifications.

That time in 2001 when he was arrested for slugging his first wife (who he married in 1989, divorced in 2003 remarried in 2005, and divorced again in 2007), which led to a guilty plea for disorderly conduct? According to the police report, he had "punched her twice with a closed fist."

About that one, he is contrite. "She was talking to me real strong, and I lost my mind and slapped her in front of the kids," he says. "Her lawyer said it was a closed fist, but even slapping her was wrong."

And what happened in Costa Rica with Ghent? "She was trying to Mace me," he says, "and you can't see anything so all you can do is try to bat somebody away, and I think that something caught her. But I wasn't trying to hit her."

And the 2005 incident in the restaurant? When Howard and a couple were waiting in line to be seated, they got into an argument that didn't end until Howard knocked the man to the ground and hit the woman.

Howard says he wasn't even in any line. He'd just gone to check out the wait time for a table. The woman accused him of cutting in front of her and one thing led to another, with him acting in self-defense. He pleaded guilty, once again, to disorderly conduct.

One of the oddest things is how the 2005 restaurant incident echoes what happened with his father, Tyrone, then a 21-year-old unemployed laborer, at that Cleveland department store in 1971. It too started off as an argument about who was next in a line. One man, who had three of his kids with him, accused Tyrone of cutting in front of them with his own three kids, including two-year-old Terrence, and his pregnant wife, Anita. It boiled over into violence, and somehow, Tyrone got hold of a nail file, stabbed the guy until he fell, then fled the scene. The crime made national news and became known as the "Santa Line Slaying."

"I was standing next to my father, watching," Howard says. "Then stuff happened so quickly – blood was on the coats, on our jackets – and then my dad's on a table and then my dad is gone to prison."

Leaning into the softness of the sofa, he continues, "My daddy taught me, 'Never take the vertebrae out of your back or the bass out of your throat. I ain't raisin' sheep. I raised men. Stay a man.' But being a man comes with a curse because it's not a society made for men to



Ghetto Superstar

Howard with Mira Pak, the mother of his youngest child **(1)**. In *Hustle & Flow*. He was nominated for an Oscar for his role as a Memphis pimp **(2)**. His dad, Tyrone **(3)**, killed a man in front of two-year-old Terrence while in line to see Santa.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: PACIFICCOASTNEWS; © PARAMOUNT/EVERETT COLLECTION; "CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER"/LANDOV

flourish anymore. Everything is androgynous, you know? The more successful men now are the effeminate." Which is another attitude that has gotten him heat. Not that he cares. "The people that judge you don't matter. They're not real. Everything is just frequencies."

He picks up one of his intricate plastic what-is-its and holds it to his eyes. "Like with these things," he says. "In those four years where I was shunned and walked away from everything, look at what I've created. But I was not trying to make this when I made it, I was just trying to find the four forces, so I took four planes and put them together where they fit naturally, an equilateral triangle, and it created a circle, a triangle and a square, and from there everything else was created just following my hands leading to a good place."

He steps across the room, considers some other objects – straight lines and curves in plastic, clear and colored, bending and unbent, stitched together with copper wire, soldered in places – and returns with a roundish one.

"Since I was a child of three or four," he says, "I was always wondering, you know, why does a bubble take the shape of a ball? Why not a triangle or a square? I figured it out. If Pythagoras was here to see it, he would lose his mind. Einstein, too! Tesla!" He shakes his head at the miracle of it all, his eyes opening wide, a smile beginning to trace itself, like he's expecting applause or an award. And all you can do is nod your head and try to follow along. He just seems so convinced that he's right. And that he is about to change the world.

"This is the last century that our children will ever have been taught that one times one is one," he says. "They won't have to grow up in ignorance. Twenty years from now, they'll know that one times one equals two. We're about to show a new truth. The true universal math. And the proof is in these pieces. I have created the pieces that make up the motion of the universe. We work on them about 17 hours a day. She cuts and puts on the crystals. I do the main work of soldering them together. They tell the truth from within."

After a while, Qirin has had enough of these goings-on and begins to cry. Howard lifts him out of his crib and wanders down the hallway. Pak watches them go.

She says she first met Howard in the middle of the day at an L.A. restaurant where she was having lunch with an old boss. He marched up to the table and said to the man, "I don't know if she's your wife or girlfriend, but she's absolutely stunning." She said, "That's very bold of you." He said, "Well, only a tiger can approach a tiger." Three weeks later, they were married.

"Isn't that crazy?" she says today. "And we have an amazing connection. But, I mean, he's not perfect. Doesn't do the dishes. Doesn't cook. Doesn't lift a finger. I probably leave him 30 times a month." She laughs and goes on, "He's so selfish. But, you know, he didn't have much of a childhood. It was difficult for him being picked on and bullied all the time. We don't have a normal life. In our two years together, I've only gone to restaurants with him two or three times. We've never been to the supermarket together. We've never been to the movies. I've never gotten a gift from him. Never, never.

"And then every minute that he has free, it's to do this." She gestures at some of Howard's thingamajigs, tilting her head questioningly. "I help him, cutting, drawing and putting things together. I've developed a slight form of agoraphobia lately. I never go out. I have no friends here. I feel like Rapunzel, you know, stuck in a penthouse with my baby."

Soon, Howard strolls back in, Qirin asleep in his arms. "You ask some good questions of my wife? She gonna get us in trouble?"

Ah, not too bad.

"No, not too bad. That's like a doctor with a big-ass needle saying, 'This ain't gonna hurt.'"

'My mom got pregnant with me when she was 15," he says later on. "She'd already had my older brother and was headed to the abortion clinic with my uncle, when they stopped at a red light and she was like, 'No, this would not be happening if he wasn't meant to be here.'"

And so all his life it's been like that – if not one thing, then another.

At birth, he says, his skin was so yellow that doctors at the hospital thought he had jaundice and whisked him away to a darkened room for three days. "No contact with Mom," he says. "Inside an incubator inside a dark room. The first three days of my life."

Soon after his father returned from prison, his parents divorced. The fami-

ly had gone from poor, to broke, to shattered. His mom moved to L.A., to try to make it as an actress, while his dad stayed put. Terrence split his time between the two.

In their ghetto Cleveland neighborhood, Tyrone Howard was known as No Nation, for his mixed-race look, and Terrence was called High Yellow, for the color of his skin. He was tormented because of it. "Let's smack him and see how long it takes him to turn red," the kids would say. Raised to turn the other cheek, he would not fight back, until an uncle saw him get a severe beat-down at the age of 13 and taught him how to box, Rocky-style. After that, he was good to go. "I was the pretty boy, so people didn't think I could defend myself, but it didn't end up being a good day for them."

He first took an interest in sex in grade school. "In the ghetto, things happen a lot quicker," he says. But by the time he was 16, he'd sworn it off, and when he fell in love with this one girl, he refused to give her what she wanted. "And then she ended up having a gangbang and called me laughing with her friends on speakerphone, and I was crying because of what had happened to my girl, not knowing that this was something she wanted. Before Mira, I always picked the wrong women."

When he was in high school, nerves in his cranium began to malfunction and paralyzed the right side of his face: Bell's palsy. He says doctors gave him a 95 percent chance of it staying frozen like that forever. His right eye wouldn't close, so he had to tape it shut at night. Determined to do something about the situation, he started applying electrical shocks to his face. He says he cut the wires off his dad's electric razor, attached one end to the fuse box in the basement and pressed the other to his skin. "I did that every day for five months and then I felt the slightest little twitch inside," he says. He recovered fully, pretty much. It was around this time he began to experiment with his handwriting: "The right side of my face behaved in a different way from the left, so I thought, 'Maybe that's also true of hands.' I was right-handed, so I started writing with my left hand and then I reversed the direction and started writing backward with both hands."

After high school, he attended Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, studying chemical engineering, until he got into an argument with a professor about what one times one equals. "How can it equal one?" he said. "If one times one equals one that means that two is of no value because one times itself has no effect. One times one equals two because the square root of four is two, so what's the square root of two? Should be one, but we're told it's two, and that cannot be." This did not go over well, he says, and he soon left school. "I mean, you can't conform when you know innately that something is wrong."

By this time, he was already trying to make it as an actor. He had a job at Pan Am as a reservation agent, which allowed him to fly to L.A. for auditions on the cheap, where he could hand out a résumé that was full of sham acting distinctions. A bit part in a *Cosby Show* episode, which was cut in the editing room, led to other TV work and finally, in 1995, to a solid role in *Mr. Holland's Opus,* and, four years later, to *The Best Man*.



King of Prime Time

Howard on the Fox hit *Empire*. "Everything I do with Lucious is still me," Howard says. "I just change the frequency."

By and large, it's been a trip out of poverty that seems pretty outlandish, but whether it's apocryphal or just the way he explains himself to himself or all true, it's exactly how he says it happened, for better or for worse.

Grievances, he's got a few. Just the way it worked out, with him coming off the success of *Crash* and *Hustle & Flow* and a Denzel-like career waiting in the wings, he was the first hire and highest-paid actor on *Iron Man,* $3.5 million, with an additional $5 million waiting if a sequel got made. At this point, he'd heard the producers weren't interested in Robert Downey Jr., because of his past drug problems. But Howard says he told them he'd take a $1 million pay cut if they auditioned Downey and hired him. (Marvel Studios disputes Howard's version of Downey's hiring and the alleged salary cut, saying Howard played no part in getting Downey the job.) "Robert was so thankful and *dadadadada*," says Howard. Come time to make *Iron Man 2,* however, the producers went to Howard's agent, told him they were cutting Howard's part down and wanted a salary reduction. As Howard recalls it, his agent said "fuck you" and slammed down the phone. By the next day, Don Cheadle had been hired as his replacement.

"And so," he says, "I called Robby and was like, 'Look, man…' Leaving messages with his assistants, called him at least 17 times that day and 21 the next and finally left a message saying, 'Look, man, I need the help that I gave you.' Never heard from him. And guess who got the millions I was supposed to get? He got the whole franchise, so I've actually given him $100 million, which ends up being a $100 million loss for me from me trying to look after somebody, but, you know, to this day I would do the same thing. It's just my nature."

Then again, it's also in his nature to say things like, "I don't talk about my ex-wife because I don't talk about negative things," and later on to call out to Pak, "Hey, honey, where's the blackmail CD?"

Pak rummages around and comes up with it. Howard puts it in a laptop. It's a phone call, he says, between him and ex-wife Ghent that he secretly recorded. It starts off with her calling him "a fucking twat." She then goes on a rampage, threatening to sell tabloids some "fucking shitty tapes" of him having phone sex and dancing naked if he doesn't give her the money she says she is due and barking, "You're a fucking sociopath. Everybody should know it. I'm so sick of the shit that you've put me through."

It goes on for almost 13 endless, weird, brain-frying minutes, with Howard keeping his cool throughout, both on the recording and in the present moment. What he wants to demonstrate is that Ghent was the pit bull in their relationship, him the passive pussycat, no matter what she might say in legal documents or court. "I mean, does that sound like somebody afraid of me?" And it's true: Ghent's rage and bile are so ocean-deep you could drown in them. But she prob-

CHUCK HODES/FOX

ably should have drawn the line at extortion. It's what has allowed Howard to go to court and ask that their 2012 divorce settlement – it gives Ghent a big part of his *Empire* salary – be dismissed, which in mid-August a judge will do, finding that Howard was "coerced" into the settlement. But at the moment, all he can do is glare at the laptop, leaning toward it, hissing, "You fucking bitch. Shut the fuck up! Shut the fuck up!" (Ghent's lawyers declined comment; however, a press release following the decision called the court's process "skewed" and said their client "is currently evaluating her legal options.")

Afterward, Howard sets himself down on the sofa and looks like he's gulping for air. He once said about himself, "The sooner people declare me insane, the sooner I'll be free." So has he ever been to a shrink?

"Back in the Nineties or something. Told me I was crazy," he says. " No, he actually told me I had a sex addiction. I said, 'So what do I do?' He said, 'Don't have any sex.' I was like, 'OK, good, I getcha, I getcha.'"

On any medications?

"No. I took ayahuasca once. The only answer I got was 'Keep following your hands.'"

Pak goes to take care of the baby. Meanwhile, all of Chicago is humming outside the penthouse-floor windows, with the river beneath flowing along. Howard snaps his fingers, stands up, turns his head.

"Anytime I've ever done anything wrong, it'll sneak back up on me," he says. "I mean, right away. So then I'm conscious when I've set booby traps along the way. I figure it's just my walk. But if those things hadn't happened, I wouldn't have this."

He seems to mean his son Qirin, his fantastic plastic objects and one times one equals two, the apartment mirrors he sometimes stands in front of, his *Empire* role, even his soon-to-be-ex-wife Pak.

"I spent all my time as a kid trying to fit in," he goes on. "My uncle said to me, 'Why are you so busy trying to fit in when you were born to stand out?' I was 14. He said, 'You're a young prince, and someday ye shall grow up to be a king.' Many years ago, Oprah said to me, 'Your crown is waiting right there. Pick it up and put it on.' I remember being in the womb, found comfort there, and have been aware since that moment. As a result of the travesties I've gone through, I have become awakened. I mean, after spending time with me, you can see a good part of my nature. I'm on my own path, and I like the pebbles of my cobblestones." Which seems clear enough. There's no stopping him. He's pushing ahead, writing his future forward and backward, with both his right hand and his left, surrounded by symbols only he knows the meaning of, come what may.



Peak TV Blues

There's just no way to keep up anymore. By Rob Sheffield

THERE'S TOO DAMN much. Too much good stuff. Too much great stuff. Welcome to the age of Glut TV. In an August speech, FX boss John Landgraf bluntly summed up the crazy times we're living in: "peak TV in America." He broke down the numbers – last year, there were 371 scripted series in prime time alone. "We believe 2015 will easily blow through the 400-series mark," he said. "This is simply too much television."

Fact: There will not be enough hours in 2015 to watch all the TV you want to watch. It's not humanly possible. If you give each of your eyeballs its own screen, then wire another one into your cerebral cortex, you'd still run out of time. All the shows you promise yourself (and your friends, and the TV that greets you every evening like the world's neediest roommate) you will catch up on, as soon as you get a chance? You are lying. The truth: You will die before you clear the DVR. Your final moments will be spent thinking, "But I promised my mom I'd check out *Outlander*!"

It's not even possible to sate your TV cravings by watching the proverbial "a little of everything." Because these days, until you have binge watched a series, you haven't seen it at all. To have an opinion about a show where you haven't savored every minute? That would be a scandal. (Speaking of, did Olivia and Fitz ever get back together?)

Try it: Go to a party and casually tell people you saw *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt* once. You liked it – hey, you might watch a second episode someday! Watch their faces. Get ready to spend the party in the Unfuckable Loser Corner. You have just entered church and spat coffee into the holy water.

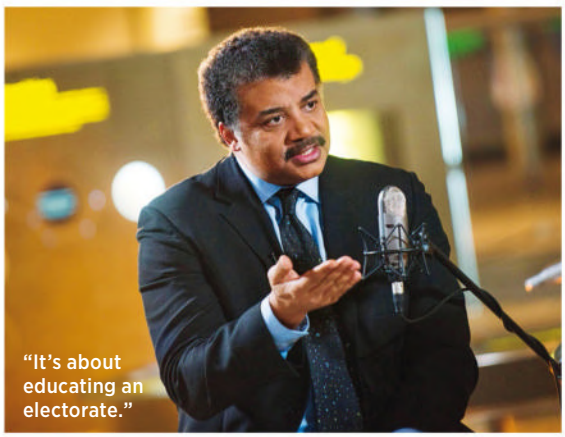
Is too much top-notch TV a good problem to have? No doubt. Even a few years ago, it would have seemed insane to think anyone could ever complain about it. But that was before the deluge. As Landgraf says, "There's just too much competition, so much so that I think the good shows often get in the way of the audience finding the great ones." Yet there's also a more fundamental problem deep in the American psyche, because talking about TV is what we do. For fans who pride themselves on keeping up with *everything*, those days are over. TV remains our guiltiest national pleasure, except now we're guilty of not making *enough* time for it. The question isn't what Glut TV will do to our remotes. The real dilemma is what it will do to our minds.

Illustration by SEAN MCCABE

The Smartest Man on TV

How Neil deGrasse Tyson is using his chat show to try to change the world

Only Neil deGrasse Tyson could possibly pull off TV's riskiest gamble: hosting the country's first science talk show. Tyson – an astrophysicist, author and host of last year's reboot of Carl Sagan's iconic series, *Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey* – debuted *StarTalk* in April on the National Geographic Channel and quickly saw it become an Emmy-nominated success. Developed from Tyson's long-running podcast series of the same name, the show is a surprisingly entertaining mixture of pop culture and intergalactic nerdery. (A sampling of guests includes Seth MacFarlane analyzing Stewie's time machine on *Family Guy*, David Byrne reminiscing about his inspiring high school math teacher, and David Crosby geeking out over sci-fi novels.) Now, for the show's second season – debuting in October – Tyson may stretch the limits of the conventional talk-show platform even further: by influencing national policy to save the planet. "One of the carrots of *StarTalk* is you're tuning in because the guests are people in pop culture," Tyson says. "But it's about educating an electorate so that you'll never choose a candidate who's in denial of objectively established scientific truths."



"It's about educating an electorate."

Comments like those, clearly aimed at climate-change deniers, have made Tyson a regular target of the right – critics have dubbed him a "smarter than thou" faux geek mostly beloved by "white liberal nerds." (Last Christmas Day, Tyson's tweet celebrating the birth of Isaac Newton – not Christ – provoked outrage.) But Tyson isn't always predictable. He's defended the potential of GMO food and puzzles over Obama's commitment to putting men on Mars by the mid-2030s. "He'll be on a beach in Hawaii by then," Tyson says with a laugh. He wishes NASA's funding ("a trifling pittance") was equivalent to farm subsidies ("They don't take us into the future or invent new technologies"). But what keeps him up at night is the possible decline in mankind's curiosity – which *StarTalk* aims to prevent. "My biggest concern is that the leading nations will cease to explore and civilization will stagnate," he says. "I want our species not just to survive but thrive – if you stop doing that, you might as well go back into the cave." DAVID BROWNE

Patrick Stewart Goes on an Epic Bender

Captain Picard on his first time doing blow and having onscreen sex

After decades of weighty roles, Patrick Stewart, 75, is finally loosening up – by playing boozing, coke-snorting anchorman Walter Blunt on the Starz sitcom *Blunt Talk*. "I used to be a really, really pompous dick," Stewart says. "But I've changed – now if it ain't fun, I won't show up."

I read that you once angrily lit into your fellow *Star Trek* actors for goofing off, telling all of them . . .
"We're not here to have fun"? That was my line. I yelled it at Denise Crosby. What an asshole I was. But now I'm here to have fun more than anything else.

Did the *Star Trek* cast help you loosen up?
They were solely responsible. If I'm funny in any way at all, they made me funny. We made a pledge to one another: Each of us would be responsible for one big belly laugh a day. So you got up to nine laughs – not bad for a day of work.



"I used to be a pompous dick."

And now you're getting whipped onscreen while semi-naked for *Blunt Talk*.
It's actually not an unpleasant experience. It hit all the poisonous alcoholic chemicals out of my body. I've done a lot of things on this show that I'd never done before.

Like what?
I'd never done a post-coital bedroom scene before, and I got to do it with Elisabeth Shue. How wonderful is that? I'd never been chased by an irate husband through the canals of Venice, California. I'd never, never done a line of cocaine in my life. [Co-star] Adrian Scarborough and I had to have someone come on the set and show us how to do it. I won't name names.

How has the news changed since you grew up?
When I was 12 years old, radio newsreaders wore tuxedos to read the news. That's how formal it was. Same with early television.

How would *Star Trek*'s Captain Picard fare in an interview with Walter Blunt?
Picard would be extremely disturbed by Walter's behavior. He would find it chaotic, harmful, damaging and unhealthy. But if he was ever a guest on *Blunt Talk,* he would walk away thinking, "That was one of the best interviews I've ever had." KORY GROW

FROM TOP: SCOTT GRIES/NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNELS; JUSTINA MINTZSTARZ



"For the first time, we're in actual reality with the characters," says the show's creator.

The Muppets Grow Up and Get Dark

Kermit and the gang deal with sex, divorce and Snapchat in a faux-documentary series

It's a balmy august morning in the offices of *Up Late With Miss Piggy*. The usual squad of flunkies, including Gonzo, Pepe the King Prawn and Scooter, surrounds Kermit the Frog, the showrunner. Fozzie Bear is off somewhere, possibly violating the office's "no Snapchat at work" policy. Piggy is the talent, so she doesn't arrive until much later in the day. There's a discussion of new guests, and Yolanda, a kindly rat, has a suggestion.

"Hey, let's call Josh Groban next. He's single, he has a great voice and he gives me the feels."

Pepe the King Prawn nods his head energetically and speaks in a vaguely Spanish accent. "Oh, he gives me the feels, too."

The rest of the room titters. Pepe doesn't back down. "What? He's a handsome man, and gender is fluid."



But Pepe stumbles over the last line. "I blew it. I apologize."

Kermit, per usual, is understanding. "That's OK."

Pepe can't resist. "I blew him."

Kermit's face puckers.

Under the table, about a half-dozen humans with their hands up the Muppets' asses break into giggles. Someone shouts, "OK, let's go again."

I hope you're in your safe place. You know all those childhood memories of Piggy talking to Peter Sellers on the variety show, the Muppets taking Manhattan and Kermit DJ'ing your bat mitzvah? Lies. They were all just picking up a paycheck. It was not real.

Take a minute.

But this time, it counts. The Muppets are back on ABC for a faux-documentary sitcom, and things are getting dark. Kermit is running a talk show with his ex and has hired all his ne'er-do-well friends. Backstage, they're being filmed by the documentarian who shot *The Office* mockumentary style.

"The movies and the original *Muppet Show*, those were jobs the Muppets took," says Bill Prady, the show's creator, who also runs a little something called *The Big Bang Theory*. "For the first time, we're in actual reality with the characters."

"The TV show and movies were just jobs they took."

Reality is angsty. Kermit and Piggy have split. Gonzo doesn't know his father. Fozzie is a hack writer whose girlfriend's parents won't accept their inter-species relationship and wonder aloud if he does, in fact, shit in the woods. Piggy is petrified that everyone will find out about her humble origins. It's not quite Ibsen, but it's definitely not Elmo and Mr. Noodle.

It seems a certainty that viewers will tune in to *The Muppets* initially for both the novelty and nostalgia factor. But will they stick around?

Prady shares the key to the show's success. "I always used to imagine that there was a bar across the street from *The Muppet Show*," he says. "And after they did the show, they would go across the street, and Fozzie would come up to Kermit and say, 'You know, it wasn't our worst show.' And they would be real. The show works if it fulfills that wish." STEPHEN RODRICK

FROM TOP: BOB D'AMICO/ABC; THE MUPPETS STUDIO/ABC; JOHN E. BARRETT/THE MUPPETS STUDIO/ABC

WESLEY SNIPES PHILIP WINCHESTER



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Meet Pop's New King of Sadness



Illustration by Yuta Onoda

The Weeknd mixes flashy Michael Jackson moves in with his druggy R&B downers



The Weeknd

Beauty Behind the Madness

XO/Republic

★★★½

BY JON DOLAN

Abel Tesfaye – the mysterious pop innovator who records as the Weeknd – set a weird new standard for gloomy self-indulgence in R&B when he came out of Canada a few years back. He was like Drake with the soul of an art-school goth, singing vaguely creepy things like "It's gonna end how you expected/Girl, you're such a masochist" in a satin-smooth voice over weeded-out, black-light-ready tracks built from stretched-out Siouxsie and the Banshees and Beach House samples. The three mixtapes he self-released in 2011 (collected one year later as his full-length *Trilogy*) and his proper major-label debut, 2013's *Kiss Land*, all seemed suspended in a predawn haze, where partying gets dark and drugs feel more like quicksand than rocket fuel. It's no surprise that this year, when he finally scored a chart-topping summer jam, it was a thinly veiled sex-as-cocaine metaphor called "Can't Feel My Face." The dude specializes in sensual numbness.

The Weeknd built a huge cult audience by sucking listeners into his lavishly appointed Batcave. Recently, though, in an unlikely twist, he's become a genuine mainstream pop player – duetting playfully with Ariana Grande on her 2014 hit





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Solo Gold From Keith Richards

Folk, reggae and tons of guitar brilliance on his first LP in 23 years

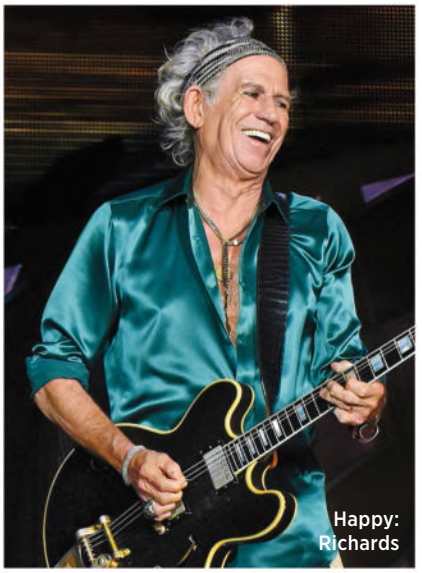
Keith Richards *Crosseyed Heart*
Republic ★★★½



KEY TRACKS: "Robbed Blind," "Trouble"

Keith Richards' first solo album since 1992 opens like a fever dream, with the 71-year-old rock god croaking acoustic blues like Robert Johnson after burning down a half-ounce spliff. But it's a feint. "All right, that's all I got," he snaps just under two minutes in, before upshifting into his most eccentric and best-ever solo set. *Crosseyed Heart* is the sound of Richards following his pleasure wherever it leads, with a lean, simpatico team including longtime session pals Steve Jordan, Ivan Neville and Waddy Wachtel backing him up all the way.

Naturally, there's a dip into roots reggae: Gregory Isaacs' 1974 lovers' rock signature, "Love Overdue," complete with brass and Neville's sweet backing vocals. There's also a straight read of "Goodnight Irene," a folk standard that Richards likely heard as a kid when the Weavers' version charted in 1950. Two originals are as strong as any Stones songs of recent decades: "Robbed Blind," a "Dead Flowers"-scented outlaw-country ballad that echoes Merle Haggard's "Sing Me Back Home," and "Trouble," all hiccup-riff swagger with a slide-guitar mash note from Wachtel to ex-Stone Mick Taylor. There's a charmingly cheeky duet with Norah Jones ("Illusion"), and some beautifully telling moments (see "Amnesia") where Keith's guitar is nearly everything – his sublime grooves sprouting melodic blooms and thorny leads. It's proof that, at core, dude's an army of one. **WILL HERMES**


Happy: Richards

CHRIS MCKAY/GETTY IMAGES

"Love Me Harder," arriving on a stadium stage as Taylor Swift's latest celebrity bestie. The Weeknd's second proper album seals the deal by reaching for full-blown Top 40 grandeur. Occasionally he nails it, especially on the tracks that are already radio smashes – "Can't Feel My Face," co-produced to perfection by Swedish teen-pop Svengali Max Martin, and the *Fifty Shades of Grey* soundtrack's "Earned It," an extravagant orchestral ballad with a richly layered vocal performance that's this guy's version of an earnest valentine.

Tesfaye's vocal model here is clearly the Michael Jackson of *Thriller* and *Bad*. Often his Michael moves feel less like influence than impersonation – but there's plenty of Eighties love to go around, from the Tracy Chapman-like coffee-shop croon on "Shameless" to the Phil Collins-esque power-ballad tsunami "Angel." The throwback feel works best when it's used to give this shadowy artist some emotional or biographical color. "Tell Your Friends," a lush Seventies-soul-steeped tune co-produced by Kanye West, follows the Weeknd from homeless kid on the mean streets of Toronto to money-chasing superstar: "My cousin said I made it big, and it's unusual/She tried to take a selfie at my grandma's funeral."

But if the sound has widened and even brightened in spots, the Weeknd still rocks a serious Eeyore vibe for much of *Beauty Behind the Madness*. "I'm better off when I'm alone," he insists on "Real Life," channeling Nineties-MJ levels of defiant isolation as drums and strings slam like doors to a crypt. Red-eyed creepers like "Often" and "The Hills" make his playboy arrogance feel a little mean-spirited. When he sings, "Only my mother could love me for me," on "Dark Times" – a bluesy duet with Ed Sheeran – his self-pity feels like a warning.

Sometimes, the album stirs up real drama. "In the Night" could be just one more "Dirty Diana"-style ode to a predatory babe – until we learn the woman in the song is the victim of abuse, "dancing to relieve the pain." And even when Tesfaye is merely being a drama queen, it's hard to look away. On "Prisoner," he hooks up with Lana Del Rey for a summit of luxuriant sadness. It's quite the slow-burning pity party – "I'm addicted to a life that's empty and cold," they sing. Ironically, this album is where the Weeknd starts warming us up like we never thought he could.

LISTEN NOW! Hear key tracks from these albums at **RollingStone.com/albums**.

★★★★★ Classic | ★★★★ Excellent | ★★★ Good | ★★ Fair | ★ Poor
Ratings are supervised by the editors of ROLLING STONE.



Duran Duran

Paper Gods Warner Bros.

★★★½

Three decades in, still trying new things, with help from Lindsay Lohan and more

More than 30 years after they were first dismissed as vapid New Wave man-dolls, Duran Duran are still kicking, and sounding surprisingly vibrant. Their 14th LP features Mark Ronson and longtime collaborator Nile Rodgers, as well as appearances by New Age soul queen Janelle Monáe, ex-Red Hot Chili Peppers guitarist John Frusciante and even Lindsay Lohan, who adds some disco-doctor patter to the sleazy-slick "Danceophobia." It's a weird mix that feels cohesive, from the mirror-ball flash of "Pressure Off" to the EDM blowout "Last Night in the City," featuring young house singer Kiesza. *Paper Gods* has a grand-old-bitch quality: On the title track, Simon Le Bon plays the bored lizard king complaining about shallow fashion zombies. But what makes this music fun is its youthful sense of invention. Our Eighties-mad era would've been happy with a *Rio* redux, but these guys aren't ready to settle for that. JON DOLAN



Chris Cornell

Higher Truth UMe

★★★

Soundgarden singer takes a high-powered acoustic turn on his fourth solo outing

Soundgarden's Chris Cornell has always had a quiet side, even when the iconic grunge band he fronted was raging like a punk-rock Zeppelin. Here, he and producer Brendan O'Brien craft a set of somber acoustic songs with titles like "Dead Wishes" and "Murderer of Blue Skies." But this is hardly an exercise in folky restraint: O'Brien's backing tracks and Cornell's nuanced growl, all the more burnished with age, infuse roots music with alt-rock dynamics. "Nearly Forgot My Broken Heart" begins with mandolin, then adds drums, fuzzed-out psych guitar and stacked vocals to make for an arena-size porch reverie. In their hands, even a finespun meditation like "Worried Moon" can become a backwoods inferno. There are some misses (the heavy-handed, hippie-gospel title track; the *Revolver*-tinged swerve "Our Time in the Universe"). But for the most part, this is the balance of power and intimacy Cornell has always wanted his solo music to have. JON DOLAN





Glen Hansard

Didn't He Ramble Anti-

★★★

Irish troubadour stretches out toward soul and blues

Glen Hansard has been a steadily prolific singer-songwriter for 25 years, first with the Dublin indie-rock act the Frames and later as half of Oscar-winning folk duo the Swell Season. On his second solo effort, Hansard explores fresh sounds, from plain-spoken blues ("Wedding Ring") to traditional-minded Irish ballads ("McCormack's Wall"). The highlight: "Her Mercy," a soul showstopper that starts small and builds toward a parade of horns and cathartic pleading. Yet as the LP progresses, Hansard too often lapses into his trademark brooding melodrama – an easy fallback for a singer who's at his best, nowadays, when he's trying something new. **JONATHAN BERNSTEIN**



Metric

Pagans in Vegas MMI

★★★

Canadian indie-pop band delivers synth-laced real talk

"I want it all!" Emily Haines sings on "The Shade," a surging love song from this Canadian band's sixth album. Such wide-eyed directness is a nice fit for a record that completes Metric's decade-long move from taut, testy indie rock toward a synthier, dreamier sound. Haines' singing is sharp but worry-worn, whether she's navigating "cascading waves of emotion" over glowering electro-grind on "Cascades" or delivering a real-talk apology to a burnt ex on the Cure-like "For Kicks." Best of all is "Lie Lie Lie," a hard-hitting shot at fakeness and sexism where Haines quotes Dylan Thomas' famous line about raging against the dying of the light – and drives it home by practicing what she preaches. **JON DOLAN**



Petz sounds: Cyrus

Miley Cyrus Takes a Long, Strange Trip

Pop's most fearlessly out-there star goes even further, with help from the Flaming Lips

Miley Cyrus *Miley Cyrus & Her Dead Petz*

Smiley Miley ★★★½



Miley, what's good? The lunatic pop princess dropped her surprise new album for free at the end of her hosting gig on this year's MTV VMAs. And it's a doozy: a psychedelic concept trip about sex, drugs and her dead blowfish, mostly created in collaboration with the Flaming Lips' Wayne Coyne. The songs reference this exciting new drug called "pot," which Miley has discovered and would like to explain to the rest of us. Result: The ex-Disney moppet moans, "How dare you bring another chick in our bed?/You lucky I'm doing my yoga or you might be dead."

"Something About Space Dude" is the real killer here – an aching acoustic sex ballad about a Bowie boy who isn't even there, leaving her to sob, "I want to be there skateboarding in a space dude's evil lair." Most of *Dead Petz* sounds pretty much like the Lips' latter-day output – she aims for Coyne-like high notes that don't suit her lowdown voice. But she scores wacko successes like "Milky Milky Milk," "Cyrus Skies" and "Slab of Butter (Scorpion)," along with cameos from Big Sean, Ariel Pink and producer Mike Will Made It. Her best line: "Your lips get me so wet/While I'm singing all the verses from the Tibetan Book of the Dead." Relax and float downstream, girl. **ROB SHEFFIELD**

KEY TRACKS:
"Dooo It!"
"Cyrus Skies"



Hollywood Vampires

Hollywood Vampires

Republic/UMe

★★★½

Alice Cooper and friends bash out a fun hard-rock covers LP

Alice Cooper has said the debut from Hollywood Vampires – a supergroup led by Cooper, Joe Perry and a flashy guitar upstart named Johnny Depp – is a tribute to his "dead drunk friends" (also the title of a chantey-like original tune here). But it's mostly made of surprisingly upbeat cover songs, with hard-rocking renditions of "My Generation," "Break on Through" and "Manic Depression." Better still, Paul McCartney, Dave Grohl, Joe Walsh and even late *Dracula* star Christopher Lee make guest appearances. What holds it all together is Cooper, who, at 67, still possesses one of the best and grittiest voices in rock and the endless charisma of the undead. **KORY GROW**



The Internet

Ego Death Odd Future/Columbia

★★★½

Odd Future crew makes inviting, heartbroken funk-soul album

Smoky bedrooms and stale airport terminals set the vibe for the third LP from the Internet, the Los Angeles funk crew fronted by singer, songwriter and lovelorn Casanova Syd tha Kyd. Over 12 warm, spacey tracks, Syd reappropriates the satin romanticism of classic Seventies soul for 21st-century girls who want to be with girls. She's got help from an impressive guest list of rising left-field stars: Janelle Monáe sends "Gabby" spiraling into a mournful waltz, while Syd's Odd Future pal Tyler, the Creator kicks off the kind of block party that dreams are made of in "Palace/Curse." The best tracks fade away into gravity-defying instrumental outros that make Syd's heartache feel sublimely serene. **SUZY EXPOSITO**

JOHN SHEARER/GETTY IMAGES

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Low

Ones and Sixes Sub Pop
★★★½

Indie-pop minimalists explore new sounds on catchiest LP yet

Low have been indie rock's most economical songwriters for 20 years and running, but their 11th LP takes a bold step toward pop. "What Part of Me," with its upbeat percussion, fuzzy guitar textures and sweet harmonized lyrics about relationship boundaries ("What part of me don't you own?"), feels like a sideways response to the post-*1989* maximalism of today's Top 40; "Into You" is a gospel-inflected, subtly sexy slow jam; and "The Innocents" sets accusatory vocals over a crunching electro-industrial beat, all to excellent effect. Elsewhere, on the gentle, pained duet "Lies," Low remind us they're still masters of doing a lot with a little. **KORY GROW**

Gary Gets It Together

On his second studio LP, ace guitarist Gary Clark Jr. carves out his own lane

Gary Clark Jr. *The Story of Sonny Boy Slim* Warner Bros. ★★★



Gary Clark Jr.'s versatility is both blessing and curse. The Austin ace's 2012 breakthrough album, *Blak and Blu,* shuffle-mixed through blues roots; raw, Hendrix-channeling solos; glossy, modern R&B; and points between, but never quite figured out how to connect the dots. Three years later, his studio follow-up does – mainly by focusing on his unfuckwithable guitar. Clark carves out a Prince-ly room of his own with wah-wah-washed acid rock ("Grinder") and ping-ponging, Bootsy-tinted funk ("Star"). There's also the rap-cadence soul of "Hold On," with echoes of Marvin Gaye and Kanye West; the deep groove of "Wings," a slinky duet with Austin singer Tameca Jones; and "Church," a stripped-down folk meditation à la Taj Mahal that unpacks the drama behind one man's prayers. The playing never stumbles, though the writing occasionally does: Murder-ballad tradition and sexy falsetto notwithstanding, the woman-in-the-crosshairs image in "Cold Blooded" seems questionable in a nation toxic with domestic violence. "This music is my healing," Clark passionately declares on the album's opening salvo, "The Healing." In the reprise, he sings that line again, changing "my" to "our." And for the most part, he's right. **WILL HERMES**

KEY TRACKS: "Star," "The Healing"



Slim pickin': Clark

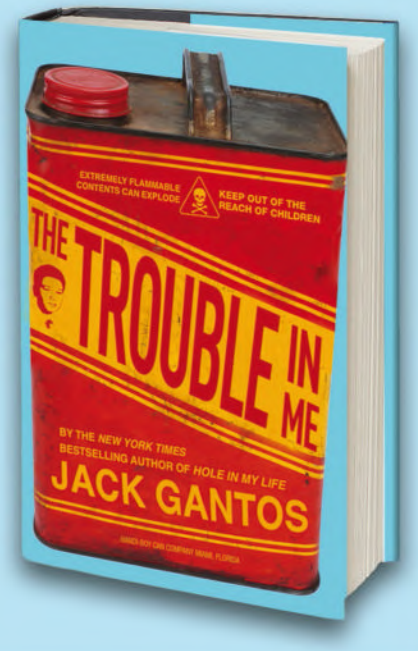
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Slayer

Repentless Nuclear Blast

★★★

Thrash-metal godfathers are still raging after all these years

Decades after Metallica and Megadeth started writing radio-friendly songs, thrash-metal firebrands Slayer are still courting controversy – depicting Jesus in hell on their new LP cover and howling, "A little violence is the ultimate drug/Let's get high!" on standout "Vices." Chilean-American frontman Tom Araya even teases a race war on "Pride in Prejudice." It's Slayer's first record without late guitarist-songwriter Jeff Hanneman – but it's their most vital, bloodthirsty offering since 2001's *God Hates Us All,* with furious guitar solos from Kerry King and guest Gary Holt. Slayer may never change. With an album like this, why should they? **KORY GROW**



Nathaniel Rateliff & the Night Sweats

Nathaniel Rateliff & the Night Sweats Stax/Concord

★★★

Colorado folkie breaks through by channeling his inner soul man

Some artists undergo reinventions. What Nathaniel Rateliff accomplishes on his first LP with the Night Sweats – transforming himself from folk troubadour to funky soul bandleader – is a revelation. Rateliff comes on like Van Morrison fronting Booker T. & the MG's, reviving the glory days of his label, Stax. The robust opener, "I Need Never Get Old," sets the fever pitch with its chugging groove and blaring horns; the rowdy "S.O.B." is just itching for a bar brawl. Even so, Rateliff hasn't completely forgotten his folkie past: The wistful "Wasting Time" shows that he can still kill you softly. **CHUCK ARNOLD**



Darlene Love

Introducing Darlene Love Wicked Cool/Columbia

★★★½

Girl-group royal takes back her throne with help from E Street

Yep, there's irony in the title of this showcase for pop vet Darlene Love. It sounds like what you'd expect from producer Steve Van Zandt: like the E Street Band updating Spector's Wall of Sound. Love comes at it like a wrecking ball, husky alto thrillingly intact, channeling girl-group passion through a woman's scars on vintage material and two Brill Building ringers by Bruce Springsteen. The unlikely highlights: a duet with Righteous Brother Bill Medley on Elvis Costello's "Still Too Soon to Know," and "Jesus Is the Rock (That Keeps Me Rollin')," a gospel shouter by Van Zandt, who clearly heard God in this voice. **WILL HERMES**



Alessia Cara

Four Pink Walls Def Jam

★★★½

Rising Canadian pop star hates parties, loves being a teen

The R&B slow-burners and bouncy pop jams on 19-year-old Canadian singer Alessia Cara's debut EP feel more like a personal manifesto than a party playlist. On her excellent single "Here," she's an "anti-social pessimist" brooding over a Portishead sample; on the joyous "Seventeen," she provides a savvy update on Janis Ian's "At Seventeen" and Fleetwood Mac's "Landslide." Later on, *Four Pink Walls* takes a turn toward retro soul, successfully channeling the conversational style of Cara's hero Amy Winehouse. "Went from 'when boredom strikes' to 'Ms. Star on the Rise,'" Cara sings. She's unapologetically young, and only going up from here. **BRITTANY SPANOS**



The Prince of Darkness

Johnny Depp really lets it rip as the FBI's most wanted killer

By Peter Travers

Black Mass

Johnny Depp, Joel Edgerton, Benedict Cumberbatch

Directed by Scott Cooper

★★★½

ICE-COLD. DEAD EYES. DEmonic laugh. His face a mask you can't read until he's up in yours. Then run. That's Johnny Depp giving everything he's got in a riveting, rattlesnake performance as South Boston gangster James "Whitey" Bulger in *Black Mass*. The FBI finally grabbed this Osama bin Laden of gangsters in 2011. The Irish mobster had been hiding in plain sight since 1994. Now 86, Bulger molders in prison, found guilty of 11 of the 19 murders with which he'd been charged.

Jack Nicholson did a fictional take on Bulger in 2006's Oscar-winning *The Departed* (while a fugitive, Bulger reportedly sneaked in to see the film). *Black Mass,* smartly directed by Scott Cooper (*Crazy Heart*), casts a wide if hardly deep net, since the tentacles of Bulger's tale could fill a miniseries or five. The script, by Mark Mallouk and Jez Butterworth, is based on the 2000 book *Black Mass: The True Story of an Unholy Alliance Between the FBI and the Irish Mob,* by Dick Lehr and Gerard O'Neill. And an unholy alliance it truly was.

Bulger had known FBI agent John Connolly (Joel Edgerton) from the Boston hood. It's Connolly who persuades his fellow Southie to turn FBI informant in return for help in crushing the Italian Mob. Bulger got the best of that deal, leaving the FBI boss (Kevin Bacon) fuming. Edgerton excels at detailing the dread eating at Connolly; the dread also infects his ethical wife, Marianne (a superb Julianne Nicholson), whose quiet scene with Depp instills more terror than a hail of bullets.



AMERICAN GANGSTER Depp exudes the menace of Boston criminal Whitey Bulger.

But you get the bullets, too, and the gore, especially when Bulger lieutenant Stephen Flemmi, expertly slimed by Rory Cochrane, is on the scene. And duck when Bulger turns his gun on informant Brian Halloran, played with bug-fuck lunacy by Peter Sarsgaard.

Is there any sympathy for the devil that is Whitey? The death of his only son, at age six, clearly rocks him, as it does the boy's mother (a touching Dakota Johnson). But the key path into Bulger is his good brother, William "Billy" Bulger, former Massachusetts Senate president. Billy remains shrouded in mystery. Luckily, Brit acting icon Benedict Cumberbatch doesn't need dialogue to make his character understood. Cumberbatch reveals Billy's loyalty in the space between words. Frustrating? At times, yes. But you forgive the zigs, zags, evasions and subplots for the hardcore power of Depp's performance and the film's portrait of moral rot on both sides of the law. If there's such a thing as a wild ride into the heart of darkness, this is it.

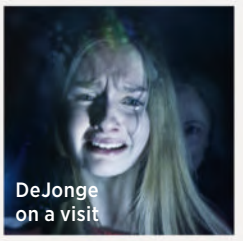
To Grandmother's House . . .

The Visit

Olivia DeJonge

Directed by M. Night Shyamalan

★★½



DeJonge on a visit

Well, it's not in the same league as *The Sixth Sense*, but director M. Night Shyamalan ends a long dry spell with *The Visit.* It's a blend of mirth and malice that combines Grimm fairy tales with the found-footage gimmick of *Paranormal Activity*. A mom (Kathryn Hahn) sends her two kids (Olivia DeJonge and Ed Oxenbould), both experts with digital cameras, to visit her estranged parents. It's all smiles until Grandma (Deanna Dunagan, wowza) gets naked and Grandpa (Peter McRobbie) does strange things with his adult diapers. No spoilers, except to say that cheap thrills can still be a blast. Not enough to make up for Shyamalan's awful *After Earth,* but it's a start.

Sicario

Emily Blunt, Josh Brolin, Benicio Del Toro

Directed by Denis Villeneuve

★★★½

IN SPANISH, "SICARIO" MEANS "hitman." In film terms, *Sicario* is sensational, the most gripping and tension-packed spin through America's covert War on Drugs since Steven Soderbergh's *Traffic* 15 years ago. French-Canadian director Denis Villeneuve (*Prisoners, Incendies*), working from a dense, devastating script by *Sons of Anarchy* actor Taylor Sheridan, is out to shatter your nerves. And does he ever.

Warning: Hang on in the early stages while you suss out intrigues that rival *Game of Thrones*. The audience surrogate is definitely FBI field agent Kate Macer, played by Emily Blunt in a powerhouse performance that ranks with the year's best. Blunt proved she could kick ass in *Edge of Tomorrow,* in which co-star Tom Cruise looked like a wuss by comparison. In *Sicario,* Kate is damn near a woman alone.

We first meet her in Arizona, in a hideout run by a Mexican drug cartel, with decom-

FROM TOP: WARNER BROS. PICTURES; UNIVERSAL PICTURES

posing corpses stuffed in the walls. Nothing throws Kate till she's basically ordered to volunteer for an agency-merging task force that pits one drug lord (Bernardo Saracino) against another (Julio César Cedillo).

Confused? Just soak it up, which is the advice Kate gets from operations chief Matt Graver (Josh Brolin, smartass and stellar), a laid-back manipulator in sandals who claims to be working a defense contract but has the aura of CIA. His associate Alejandro (Benicio Del Toro) is an ex-Mexican-prosecutor-turned-assassin. Does Alejandro have a personal agenda? Look in his eyes. Del Toro, who won an Oscar for *Traffic,* is tremendous again here, radiating a smoldering cool that throws the sexually unflappable Kate off her game.

Sicario is a setup for scalding action in a world where right and wrong are no longer absolutes. As Kate tries to stand her moral ground while the ground keeps shifting, Villeneuve stages one gut-wrenching scene after another, set to a jittery, jangling score by Jóhan Jóhannsson. And kudos to cinematographer Roger Deakins: His aerial shots of a white-knuckle border crossing contrast vividly with a breathless chase through drug tunnels, and he achieves visual miracles. Still, it's on Blunt's expressive face that *Sicario* writes its darkest poetry. Prepare to be haunted for a good long time.

Sleeping With Other People

Jason Sudeikis, Alison Brie

Directed by Leslye Headland

★★★

SOMEONE HAS CALLED THIS comic raunchfest "*When Harry Met Sally* with assholes." Since that someone is the film's writer-director, Leslye Headland, she's allowed. But she's also selling herself short. *Sleeping With Other People* hits the sweet spot between hot and hilarious because its lovers spit at rom-com clichés. Maybe not as spittingly as in *Bachelorette,* Headland's debut film, but enough to give us two assholes to root for.

They are Jake (Jason Sudeikis) and Lainey (Alison Brie), the girl he deflowered while they were students at Columbia in 2002. They reunite at rehab for sex addicts – Jake is a pussyhound, and Lainey still hooks up with a college creep (Adam Scott), now an Ob-Gyn who's engaged to someone else. They decide to become friends without benefits. Assholes!

All this would collapse if Headland didn't keep things crackling, especially when Jake shows Lainey how to masturbate with a tea jar. Even when the laughs are spotty, the actors stay on point. Sudeikis, late of *SNL,* is terrific, showing an unexpected capacity for feeling as well as fun. And Brie, so good on *Mad Men,* can do anything, breaking you up at a kindergarten dance (Lainey is a teacher) while high on molly, or just plain breaking your heart. This movie does that to you. It makes you laugh till it hurts.

Pawn Sacrifice

Tobey Maguire

Directed by Edward Zwick

★★★

BIOPICS ARE A DIME A dozen, but Tobey Maguire gives such a transfixing, transformative performance as chess master Bobby Fischer in *Pawn Sacrifice* that you're hooked. Working from a script by Steven Knight, director Edward Zwick lays the groundwork for Fischer's obsessions and tirades – hatred of Russians, anti-Semitism (though he is a New York Jew), a promiscuous mother (Robin Weigart) who teases him about his father's identity. But as soon as Zwick quits the psychologizing to focus on the 1972 World Chess Championship in Reykjavík, Iceland, where Fischer faces off against Soviet grandmaster Boris Spassky (a sly, humane Liev Schreiber), *Pawn Sacrifice* grabs you and doesn't let go. The film offers few answers about Fischer's descent into derangement. But you watch Maguire and slowly, with pity and terror, you understand.









(1) Blunt hunts drug cartels in *Sicario.* (2) Sudeikis and Brie play sex addicts in *Sleeping With Other People.* (3) Maguire ponders the chessboard as Bobby Fischer in *Pawn Sacrifice.* (4) Gere plays a homeless man in *Time Out of Mind.*

Time Out of Mind

Richard Gere

Directed by Oren Moverman

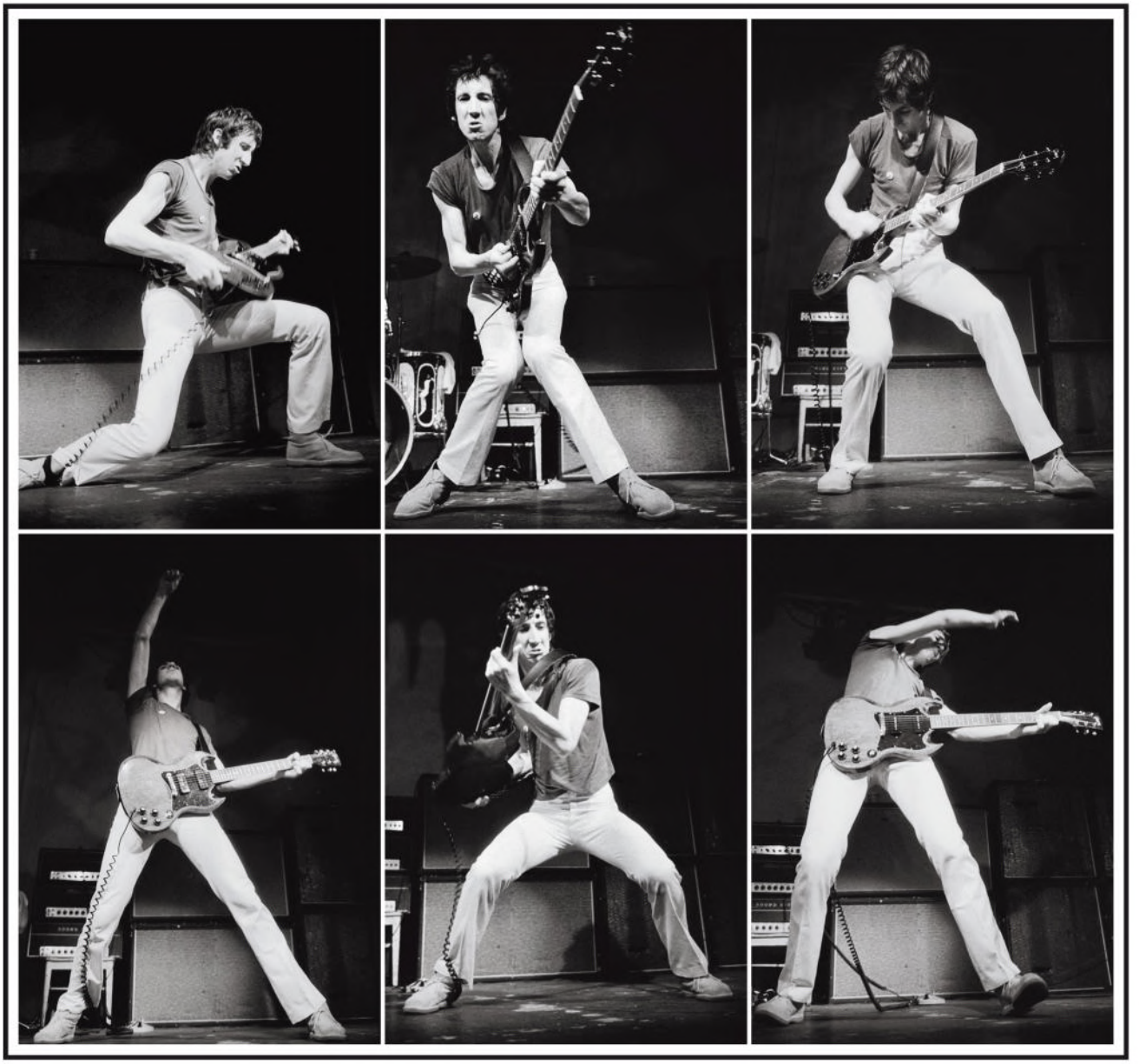
★★★½

EVERYONE INVOLVED IN this small miracle of cinema is on the high wire. Richard Gere, deprived of his movie-star looks, plays a homeless man adrift in New York. Oren Moverman, the gifted Israeli-American writer-director of *The Messenger* and *Rampart,* deprives himself of the tear-jerking backstory that keeps butts in seats. *Time Out of Mind* recalls the neorealism of, say, De Sica's *The Bicycle Thief.* It's stripped bare of Hollywood trappings. Moverman and cinematographer Bobby Bukowski shot Gere with hidden cameras, watching the world ignore him.

And yet you can't turn away, so ardent and artful is the film at hand. As the sights and sounds of the big city overwhelm this perpetual stranger, who can barely gather the strength and the words to register for a shelter or a session at Bellevue, his life becomes briefly ours. No self-pity. No sermons. A few facts emerge – a family tragedy, a lost job, an estranged daughter (Jena Malone) – mostly gleaned from interactions with another homeless man, played with grit and grace by Ben Vereen.

But for Gere's character – his senses bombarded with aural chaos, his memory dimmed by lapses he refers to as "losing time" – there is only alone. Gere, who has shockingly never been nominated for an Oscar, gives the performance of his career, intuitive and indelible. Maybe it's naive to think a movie like this can heighten our awareness, even change things. So what. Godspeed.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: RICHARD FOREMAN JR.; LINDA KALLERUS; TAKASHI SEIDA; ALLISON ROSA



RS 17 SEPTEMBER 14TH, 1968

Townshend Learns to Windmill

In 1963, Pete Townshend first encountered the Rolling Stones and became an "instant fan": Townshend's then-band, the Detours, were opening for the Stones at a ballroom in a London suburb. "As Keith Richards waited for the curtain to open," Townshend later wrote, "he limbered up by swinging his arm like a windmill." The star-struck Townshend adapted the move into his stage act. "I thought I was copying my hero," he said. A year later, he asked Richards if he minded that he nicked his routine. "He looked at me like I was a germ," said Townshend. "And I realized he didn't remember doing it." The move became Townshend's trademark with the Who. RS photographer Baron Wolman captured it at San Francisco's Fillmore West in August 1968; the shots would accompany editor Jann S. Wenner's two-part interview with Townshend. "I was absolutely fascinated by Townshend," says Wolman. "But I look back at those contact sheets now and think, 'How come I didn't shoot Keith Moon like that?' "

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1968: On the Charts

Week of September 14th

1. **"Harper Valley P.T.A."** Jeannie C. Riley
2. **"People Got to Be Free"** The Rascals
3. **"Born to Be Wild"** Steppenwolf
4. **"Light My Fire"** Jose Feliciano
5. **"1,2,3, Red Light"** 1910 Fruitgum Co.
6. **"Hush"** Deep Purple
7. **"You Keep Me Hangin' On"** Vanilla Fudge
8. **"Do It Again"** The Beach Boys
9. **"You're All I Need to Get By"** Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell
10. **"The House That Jack Built"** Aretha Franklin

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